

THE INDIAN
ORTHODOX
CHURCH
AN OVERVIEW

DR.
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Anyone who asks for this volume, to read, collate, or copy from it, and who appropriates it to himself or herself, or cuts anything out of it, should realize that (s)he will have to give answer before God's awesome tribunal as if (s)he had robbed a sanctuary. Let such a person be held anathema and receive no forgiveness until the book is returned. So be it, Amen! And anyone who removes these anathemas, digitally or otherwise, shall himself receive them in double.

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN INDIA

AN OVERVIEW

By

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Metropolitan of Delhi and the North

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Foreword

This light work is hastily put together, largely, but not entirely, from secondary sources. Inconsistencies and errors are likely to have crept in. If pointed out, they can be corrected in the next edition.

I have used a good deal of my own material in the book which I edited in German: *Die Syrischen Kirchen in Indien* (1974). An attempt has been made to bring the account up to date, but by no means exhaustive.

This is a hand-book for the curious and the non-expert. The expert may find much here that could be faulted. For such criticism too, the author would be grateful.

The author owes a big debt of gratitude to many who have helped, but above all to God.

Kottayam

Feast of the Holy Cross, 1982

Paulos Mar Gregorios

CHAPTER I

Fragments

Emissaries of the western church began to appear in India in the late thirteenth century already. European travellers have left us their accounts of the Christian church they saw in India. It was one church, united, tolerant, living in peace with Hindus and Muslims – perhaps too much at peace.

Today this one church of India is in fragments – thanks to the impact of western missions. The Thomas Christians or “Syrian” Christians of India are today in not less than fifteen different churches and denominations.

The largest faction is now in the Roman Catholic church. The Catholic Syrians are themselves divided into two jurisdictions, each with its own special rite and liturgical tradition. Many of the Catholic Syrians have joined later the Latin Catholics, who use the Roman rite,

1. **The Syro-Malabar rite**, which uses the East Syrian liturgy is the more numerous in adherents. They have now eleven dioceses and thirteen bishops with a total of more than 1,500 parishes, and some 2.5 million members. They are grouped together in two Archbishoprics, those of Ernakulam and Changanacherry. The Archbishop of Ernakulam, His Eminence Mar Joseph Parekattil, was made a Cardinal in 1969, a recognition by Rome that the Catholics of the Malabar rite formed an important segment of the Roman Catholic Church in India. In this rite is

the diocese of Palai, still reputed to be the world Catholic Church's largest producer of vocations to the priesthood and to the monastic life.

2. **The Syro-Malankara Rite** of the Roman Catholic Church is smaller and more recent in its inception in India. The founder in India was Mar Ivanios, who left the Syrian Orthodox Church in 1930 along with two other bishops and a few clergy, to form the Antiochean (or Syro-Malankara) rite which follows the West Syrian liturgical tradition. This group is now under the Archbishopric of Trivandrum with three dioceses and five bishops in the Archbishopric. They have some 200,000 members, and have been growing fast by drawing Christians from other churches in Kerala.

3. **The Syrian Orthodox Church** forms the second largest group with about 1,500,000 members distributed in 15 dioceses, under the Catholicos of the East. They have about 1,200 parishes. To this Church belonged the late Miss. Sarah Chacko, who was the first woman president of World Council of Churches, Fr. Paul Verghese, an Associate General Secretary of the W.C.C. and Mr. C.I. Itty, who was Director of the Churches' Commission on Participation in Development in the W.C.C. This church has a long history of schisms and litigations and is even now having a major infight.

4. **The Mar Thoma Syrian Church** comes third in size with some 600,000 members in six dioceses. The head of this church is the Most Reverend Alexander Mar Thoma Metropolitan. Mr. M. M. Thomas, the former Chairman of the W.C.C.'s Central Committee is a lay member of this church. This church in its present form was constituted in 1843, as a result of an evangelical reform movement in the Syrian Orthodox Church.

5. **The Anglican Syrians** who are now distributed in three Kerala dioceses of the Church of South India form the next largest group. These Christians also separated from the Syrian Orthodox Church in 1847, as a result of the work of the Anglican (evangelical) Church Missionary Society. Their number is now estimated at about 200,000. They were formerly in the C.M.S. Church, but merged in 1947 with newly formed Church of South India.

6. **The Church of the East**, more familiarly known as Nestorian Christians, are a small group in Central Kerala with some 10,000 members, in 15 parishes. Their origins in their present form in India can be traced back to the coming of Mar Elias Mellus sent to India in 1874 by the Catholic Nestorian Patriarch in Iran, to reclaim the latter's jurisdiction over the Malabar Christians. Some Roman Catholics of the

Malabar rite revolted against Rome and under the leadership of Father Antony Thondatta, restarted the Chaldean or Nestorian church in India. A group of some 50 families who had settled around Trichur provided the nucleus. This church is also now divided, with two bishops on one side and one on the other.

7. **The Thozhiyoor Church**, another splinter group from the Syrian Orthodox, formed itself in the early part of the 19th century through a certain bishop Mar Kyrillos who was consecrated bishop by a Syrian bishop without the permission of the Syrian Orthodox Metropolitan. The Syrian Orthodox church obtained law-suits against him in the Princely States of Cochin and Travancore. Mar Koorilos went to Thozhiyoor, in North Kerala, away from the jurisdiction of the Maharajas of Cochin and Travancore, and set himself up as head of an independent church. They are now in communion with the Mar Thoma Church, numbering a few hundred souls. Their bishop Poulose Mar Philoxenose recently joined the Roman Catholic church and they are now without a bishop.

8. **The St. Thomas Evangelical Church** is a break-off from the Mar Thoma Church in 1961, under a Mar Thoma Priest Revd. P. John Varghese who had himself appointed bishop later on, along with another Mar Thoma priest the Revd. K.N. Oommen. Mr. Carl McIntyre who operated an organization called the International Council of Christian Churches gave financial support to facilitate the schism. When started they had some 2,500 supporters scattered in more than a hundred congregations, with some 20 priests adhering to their sect. They have their own Bible Seminary and are busy building churches to draw away more people from the existing Christian churches.

9. **The Travancore-Cochin Anglican Church** is another splinter sect formed by separation from the Kerala Dioceses of the Church of South India. They are mostly converts from the people who are previously regarded as untouchables, and the responsibility for the schism lies at least in part with the snobbishness of those "Syrian" Christians who had been converted in previous generations and therefore regarded themselves as belonging to a higher caste. The TCAC is headed by Bishop Stephen and has more than two dozen priests with some four or five thousand supporters.

10. **The various Protestant Sects.** Sectarian missionaries of various kinds have been active on the Kerala scene for a hundred years, and have managed to draw away Christians from all the major churches. In 1889 came the Salvation Army. In 1895 the Plymouth Brethren came. The

Seventh Day Adventists started "Mission work" among Christians in 1911. The Pentecostal Sects came, drew supporters from the Churches, and broke up again into several fragments, like the church of God, the Indian Pentecostal Church, the Ceylon Pentecostal Church and so on. The Jehovah's witnesses are among the most aggressive and have drawn away several unsuspecting women.

All this fragmentation began only after the coming of western missions. The general feeling in Kerala towards foreign missions is today therefore not very favourable either among the Christians or among the Hindus and Muslims though they respect the sacrificial services of the foreign missionaries. The Christians have in the last 50 years begun to show more communal rivalry vis-a-vis the non-Christians than in previous times when they seemed to have made a more harmonious adjustment with the various Hindu castes. It is not so much the zeal for evangelism that produces the conflict as the crude desire for economic and social advancement over the other communities. But rivalries among Christian groups have tended to become just as acute. The main reasons are group rivalries efforts at proselytization, the competition to build bigger and better churches, colleges and hospitals, and mutual caricaturing as well as petty manouvres for establishing one's own leadership.

The ecumenical atmosphere is spreading, although quite slowly. There is a general cessation of mutual vilification among the churches. The forty-odd bishops in Kerala from the six episcopal churches (Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Mar Thoma, C.S.I., The Church of the East and the Thozhiyoor Church) had banded together as a Kerala Bishops' Conference and have spoken together on certain matters of social or educational importance to all, but this K.B.C. has in recent years become inactive.

There is reason to hope that the ecumenical spirit will grow, and cooperation among the churches will improve. One step in this direction is the establishment of the Federated Faculty for Research in Religion and Culture, incorporating the post-graduate faculties of the theological seminaries of the Orthodox Church, the Mar Thoma Church and the Church of South India with Dr. Paulose Mar Gregorios as the Chairman. They co-operate in training candidates for the degree of Master of Theology granted by the Serampore College.

There has been close co-operation in the theological and ecumenical fields, and also in conducting seminars and study groups in various subjects of common concern.

CHAPTER II

Origins

Was the Apostle Thomas, one of the Twelve, the founder of the Church of the “Thomas Christians”? The evidence for an affirmative answer is more corroborative of an ancient tradition than finally decisive.

Two things can be said at the outset. First, there is no negative evidence against the Apostole Thomas founding the Church in India. Secondly the probability that the Church in India goes back to the Apostle Thomas is fairly high, and the circumstantial evidence supports rather than negates the inference.

Physically, the possibilities were always there. Secular evidence from writers like Strabo¹ who wrote around 7 B.C. is based on first hand experience and need not be doubted. Strabo describes clearly the trade routes followed by Greek merchants to India and China. As far as Greeks were concerned, they would not dare to travel to India in the time of the Ptolemies, but in the first century Greeks are well acquainted with East Asian countries. According to Strabo 120 ships sail the route from Myos-Hormos to India.

¹ Strabo: *Geography* 2:5. 12 and 17:1.45
(English Translation - H. C. Hamilton and W. Falconer,
The Geography of Strabo, 3 vols. London H. G. Bohr, 1845-57)

His evidence is corroborated by the *Guide book to the Red Sea*, written about 60 A.D. i.e. about the time when the Apostle Thomas was believed to be in India. The ships were small and sailed close to the coast. The book describes accurately the prevailing winds (the monsoons) on the south-west coast of India. The south country is called Damirica, probably a graecised form of "Tamil Country". Ships also go to the north-west coast, to the mouth of the Indus river. Present day Sind is called Scythia by the guide-book. It speaks of Kalyan, south of Bombay, and Muziris on the Malabar coast (present-day Cranganore in Kerala). The guide-book makes clear that it was possible for a Palestinian Jew in the first century to come to India, and especially to Kerala, by the sea-route from Persia.

In fact trade between India and the Middle East goes back to Solomonic times (ca. 1000 B.C.) according to the Biblical narrative.²

Roman coins from the time of Augustus have been found in the South of India. Pliny's *Natural History* (ca. A.D. 77) also speaks of a trade route to India along the coast of Arabia, going up to the Malabar coast. There is no reason at all to doubt that the Apostle Thomas could have made the voyage to India, without difficulty.

As for the positive evidence it is most fragmentary and circumstantial. The main document is the *Acta Thomae* written around A.D. 200 (between A.D. 180 and 230), at or near Edessa, the centre of Syrian Christianity and the first Christian city-state. This account smacks of being much less historical than historical fiction. The story goes like this:

The Apostles cast lots to find out to which country they should go. India fell to the lot of Thomas, but he refused to go to such a far away country. Christ appeared to him in a dream, promised him all necessary grace; still Thomas would not go. Finally Christ sold him as a slave to a trader called Habban who took him to India on his ship. They reached India, where Thomas was sold to king Gudnaphar, as a carpenter, to build a palace for the king. Thomas gets money from the king to build the palace, but spends it on the poor. When the king asks how the palace is coming along, Thomas always answers that it is coming along fine. When the king insists on seeing it, Thomas answers that it is in heaven. The enraged king imprisons Thomas and wants to kill him the next day. The king's brother Gad dies during the night, goes to the other world,

² The names in Hebrew for apes (*Kopi*) and peacocks (*tōgai*) show a Tamil derivation (2 Chronicles 9:21) See Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Hebrew Dictionary*. s.v. The dictionary says these are Malabar words.

and comes back to life for a moment, to tell Gudnaphar that the palace is there all right in heaven. Thomas is released. Gudnaphar becomes a Christian. Thomas then goes to another kingdom, where the king Mazdai (Vasudeva) had him speared to death by four soldiers.

Versions of the original Syriac *Acts* have come down to us in Greek, Latin, Arabic and Coptic. The historical basis, if any, of the account was totally doubtful until some years ago. The Syriac *Didaskalia* says that the Apostle Thomas sent letters from India which were read in churches along with other epistles. Some of these letters may have provided the basis for the document. Gudnaphar was regarded as unhistorical until some of his coins turned up some time ago. Even the name of his brother, has now proved to be historical. Gudnaphar was a Parthian king (called Gondaforos in Greek and Vindafarna in Parthian) whose capital was Taxila, in India, and his empire fell with the Kushan invasion of 51 A.D.

The Indian version of the Thomas Tradition, as it stood around 1600 A.D. has been recorded for us by the Portuguese writer Antonio de Gouvea. Details are given of Thomas' journey through Parthia, Media and Persia and his taking ship from Arabia to India, via Socotra. He landed in Kodungallur which was a great port and seat of the great king Keralaputra. He travelled south from Kodungallur as far as Quilon and established seven churches. Then he went to Mylapore and afterwards to China.

Gouvea got this tradition around 1601 A.D. from a monk in India who wrote it down from a song which many people had memorized and which was supposed to come from the very first century. The song itself could not have been more than a few generations old at that time, but there was undoubtedly a historical core somewhere in it. The 'Remban Song' as it is called, has historical interest in the dates and place-names it gives. Thomas came to India first in 52 A.D. He went to other kingdoms around 69 A.D. He came back to Mylapore (Madras) in 72 A.D. and was martyred there in that year.

It is not inconceivable that there was a Jewish community in India in the first century. The local Jews have a tradition that a colony of Jews came to India in the second or third century B.C. According to the Thomas tradition, the Apostle visited the Jewish synagogue in Kodungallur (Muziris) and some forty Jews were converted to the christian faith. It has also been conjectured that Habban the Palestinian merchant who brought Thomas to India was himself a converted Jew.

There are numerous references in the early Christian writers to the visit of St. Thomas to India. The Syriac document *Doctrine of the*

Apostles, which was written in Edessa around 250 A.D. gives the following information.

India and all its countries, and those bordering on it, even to the farthest sea, received the Apostle's hand of Priesthood from Judas Thomas, who was Guide and Ruler in the Church which he built there and where he ministered.³

Ephraim the Syrian, a prolific Syrian hymn writer of the 4th century states clearly that the remains of the Apostle Thomas then in Edessa were brought there from India where he had evangelized and been martyred.

The *Doctrine of the Apostles*, referred to above, (Edessa, ca. 250 A.D.) in speaking of the formation of the Scriptures of the New Testament, states that several letters from the Apostles were extant and read in the churches:

"James had written from Jerusalem, Simon from the city of Rome, John from Ephesus, Mark from the great Alexandria, Andrew from Phrygia, Luke from Macedonia and Judas Thomas from India, that the epistles of an Apostle might be received and read in the churches in every place"⁴

John Chrysostom (347-407) attests that the tomb of St. Thomas in India is as much venerated as that of Peter in Rome.

Jerome (ca. 400) clearly attests that the Church in India was established by St. Thomas.

Gregory Nazianzen (ca. 380) in one of his orations refers to the common knowledge that Thomas preached the gospel among strangers in India.

Eusebius the Church historian (+ 338) in recounting the division of the Gentile world among the various Apostles assigns Parthia to Thomas, and Socrates follows Eusebius in this. Theodore, the 5th century Church historian refers to the commonly accepted tradition that St. Thomas was the Apostle to India.

³ William Cureton, *Ancient Syriac Documents*. P. 33, cited by Wm G. Young, in *Handbook of Source Materials for Students of Church History, relative to the earliest establishment of Christianity in Edessa*, Serampore 1969, P. 26.

⁴ *Doctrine of the Apostles*, Canon 10 and conclusion in Cureton, *op. cit.* cited in Young, *op. cit.* 162

Among western writers, one of the earliest witnesses is Gregory of Tours (544-95). He describes the monastery and temple at the site of Thomas' tomb in India, and states that the Apostle's remains had long ago been transferred to Edessa.

There is a report that these remains were later removed by the Edessans from Edessa to Chios, an island in the Aegean Sea. From there it seems to have been carried to Ortona in Italy. This is contested. A part of what was supposed to be the relics of St. Thomas has been recently transferred from Edessa to Kottayam in India and is now in the Catholicate Chapel of the Syrian Orthodox Church. Like many other relics of the early Christian history, there seem to be several duplicates of the original. There is also one set in Goa, India, taken supposedly from his tomb in India.

Archaeological investigations have recently been made on the site of St. Thomas' tomb in Mylapore near Madras. The only significant evidence is that there are two tombs under the present Cathedral, one of which is now conjectured to be that of the King who was converted by the Apostle, and whose bones were interred with his.

In India it would be dangerous for anyone, whether foreigner or Indian, to argue that St. Thomas did not establish the Church here. The tradition is so strongly held by the Thomas Christians that they would be enraged at suggestions to the contrary. Several persuasive volumes have been written by Indians amassing evidence to prove that St. Thomas came to India.⁵ To the strictly objective historian, the evidence may seem inadequate. But practically all historians who have examined the local tradition and the historical evidence together have come to the conclusion that the tradition has some basis in history, in its substance though not in all detail.

What is beyond doubt is that St. Ephraim and St. John Chrysostom in the 4th century knew about the relics of the Apostle Thomas resting at that time in Edessa, and state that they were brought there from India by Syrian merchants. Ephrem has composed several stanzas of his prolific hymnody on this subject. The merchant who brought the remains is so fulsomely praised that we cannot doubt that for Ephrem at least there was no doubt that the Apostle Thomas had gone to India, died there, and that

⁵ See, for example V. C. George, *Apostolate and Martyrdom of St. Thomas*, Ernakulam, 1964.

Fr. Joseph Peediyakal, *Mar Thoma Sleehayude Charitram* (Malayalam).

For a more varied treatment, see George Menachery, (ed), *The St. Thomas Christian Encyclopaedia*, Vols 1 and 2, Trichur, India, 1973 and 1982.

his authentic remains had been transferred to Edessa. The fourth century thus definitely knows of a Church in India, and they attribute its origin to the Apostle Thomas.

The transfer of the remains must have thus taken place long before Ephrem's death in 373 A.D. The 4th century Church historian Sozomen refers to the visit to the shrine of St. Thomas in Edessa by the Roman Emperor Valens. It must have been there until the Crusaders and the Muslims together managed to destroy the city of Edessa. It is claimed by some that they were transferred to Ortona in 1258 by the Romans from the island Chios. But the Cathedral of St. Thomas in Ortona was destroyed by the Turks in 1566, the altar blown up by gunpowder, and the relics scattered. It has been reported that the relics were undamaged and are still kept there in a bronze urn under the altar. The more recent view is that these relics are of a Greek monk Thomas.

The conclusion can only be this. It is well-known in the fourth century that there is a Christian Church in India. Those who know about this Church attribute its founding to the Apostle Thomas. The information about the Indian church is based on fairly reliable eye witness reports from merchants who travel to India frequently. There is no better hypothesis which explains the origin of this Indian Church than the one attested by both universal and local tradition that the Apostle Thomas was the founder of this church. It is reasonable to believe that the Apostle Thomas went to India, preached the gospel, established the church there, and died as a martyr there. Until other evidence comes to light either about the beginning of the church in India or about the journeys and life of the Apostle Thomas, the founding of the Christian church in India is best attributed to the Apostle. Any other view can only be regarded as contentious.

Highlights

CHAPTER III

Highlights

in a Chequered History

The ancient Church was probably quite extensive in India - in the North-West (including present Kashmir, Sind, Baluchistan and Afghanistan), as well as all around the southern coast from Kalyan near Bombay on the west coast to Madras on the east coast, including probably Sri Lanka. King Gondophares with whom the tradition (*Acts of Thomas*) associates the ministry of St. Thomas was an Indo-Parthian King in the North-West, and King Vasudeva (Mazdeo) who condemned the Apostle to death was a king of the Kushan dynasty near Madras.

Middle Eastern Migrations

The ancient Christian community had trade relations with the middle east, and was reputed for its hospitality and cosmopolitan attitudes. Many christians when persecuted in the Byzantine or Persian empires fled to the south coast of India and found a ready and warm welcome there. The most famous of such immigrations was that of a colony of Palestinian settlers in Mesopotamia, who fled to India under Thomas of Cana, around A.D. 345, fleeing Persian persecution - 72 families with 400 members according to tradition. These families were received gladly by the Hindu King of that time and granted special privileges inscribed on copper plates, (or do they come from a later date?) which survive to this day. The Knanaya community of today (with Orthodox and Roman

Catholic branches) claim descent from these settlers.

How was this church governed?

We have no documentary evidence as to the polity of the Indian Church in the early centuries. The tradition says that St. Thomas established seven churches in Kerala and consecrated priests for them. The original churches were Malankara (Malayattur?) Palayur (near Chavakkad), Koovakayal (near North Parur), Kokkamangalam (South Pallipuram?) Quilon, Niranam and Nilackal (Chayal). If St. Thomas followed the pattern which the other Apostles followed, each local church was entrusted to the supervision of a group of presbyters presided over by a bishop or presiding elder. The word "priest" (*hiereus, sacerdos, kohno*) before the council of Nicea, (325 A.D.) usually referred to a bishop and not to a presbyter or priest in the modern sense. The 'priests' whom St. Thomas ordained in India were bishops.

The First Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians (first century) clearly states that the Apostles not only appointed bishops in every church but set up a system by which their successors were to be elected and consecrated (XLIV). It is legitimate to presume that the same Apostolic system prevailed also in the Indian Church. There were seven Indian bishops here, and the Indian church should have continued its own administration during the first six centuries. The documents of the Syrian church as well as of the Persian church clearly show that neither of them exercised any jurisdiction in India at that time.

Like the churches of Ethiopia and Nubia in Africa and of Armenia and Georgia in Asia (though these latter were sometimes part of the Roman or Persian Empire) the Indian church maintained its autonomous administration and life, welcoming visitors from sister churches when they came but never being dependent on them for its life and administration. We have now a complete list of all the bishoprics in the West Syrian Church in the fifth to seventh centuries, and never once does the name of any church in India appear in these lists. There were: (a) a West Syrian Church whose jurisdiction was limited to the Eastern part of the Byzantine empire, and (b) an East Syrian Church as well as (c) a Church of The East (so-called Nestorian) in the Persian Empire. These three churches used Syriac as their liturgical language, Western Syriac in the Byzantine empire and Eastern Syriac in Persia.

When and how the Indian Christians came to use the Syriac language in their liturgy is hard to find out. Perhaps they used a form of Tamil until the Persians introduced the East Syrian Liturgy in Syriac around

the 12th century. In any case when the Portuguese came in the 15th and 16th centuries they found a church here worshipping in the Syriac language. To distinguish these early christians from the new converts to the Roman Catholic church, they were the ones to give the names "Syrian Christians" and "Latin Christians" for the two different groups of christians here.

The Syrian Christians, who were one church till the Portuguese came, were later broken up into several sub-groups - Catholic Syrians or Romo-Syrians, Mar Thoma Syrians, Jacobite or Orthodox Syrians, and Chaldean Syrians.

The Persian Connection

How the Persian Church came to have jurisdiction over India is also a mystery. In the fifth century the Persian church was either torn by internal dissensions or persecuted by the state, and sought only to survive - not to expand. Only with the rise of the theological school of Nisibis the picture changed. This school soon developed into a veritable theological university, and it was from teachers trained in this school that the Arabs learned Plato and Aristotle, which they were later to bequeath to the west, thus originating the European Renaissance. What is called "Nestorian doctrine" became well established by the end of the sixth century. And it was in the seventh century, under the able Patriarchate of Ishoyab II (628-643), that the graduates of Nisibis began going out to China and India, to found or strengthen churches there.

Some of the early Syriac documents like the Chaldean Book of offices have interesting references to this missionary activity, connecting it to the Apostle Thomas:

"By St. Thomas the Chinese also with the Ethiopians
Have now turned to the Truth".
"St. Thomas has flown and gone
To the High Kingdom of the Chinese"
"The Indians and the Chinese...bring worship
In memory of Thomas, to Thy name, Our Saviour".

These references associate the churches of the Indian and the Chinese as well as of the Ethiopians to the work of St. Thomas the Apostle, whom the Persians must have regarded as their patron and founder.

We have historical evidence for the presence of Persian-Syrian missionaries in China around the year 635, in the form of the *Sin-gnan-fu* monument in Shensi province in Middle China. The Persian Crosses of

India (presently in Kottayam, Muttuchira, Kadamattom and in St. Thomas Mount, Madras) could possibly belong to the same period.

It is also conceivable that this Persian church had considerable influence in other parts of Central Asia like Tibet, where the traditions of Buddhist monastic life and iconography bear striking resemblance to the Eastern Christian tradition in these respects. The Persian Christians were very influential also in Mongolia and Mongolian Buddhism still bears its marks.

It is at this time (seventh century) that specific references to the Indian church appear in Persian records. We find both a Metropolitan of China and a Metropolitan of India in the consecration records of the Patriarchs (of Babylon) of the Persian church. Sometime the Persian church regarded the Indian church as under the jurisdiction of Riwardashir in Fars (south Iran), but we have Persian church documents from the 7th century recognising the full autocephaly (or at least autonomy) of the Indian church and its Metropolitan, but demanding that the latter send every six years a letter of allegiance to the Patriarch of Babylon. No such letters of allegiance have been discovered to date.

Babylonian Patriarch Sliba Zoha (714-728 A.D.) raised the Indian church back to its traditional dignity of a Metropolitanate, freeing it from the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Riwardashir. The traditional title, by the eleventh and the twelfth centuries, of the primate of the Indian church was "The Metropolitan and The Gate of All India" (presumably under the influence of Islamic titles?), and the Vatican Syriac Codex 22, written in Cranganore in 1301 A.D., gives the title as: "The Metropolitan Bishop of the Throne of St. Thomas, and of the whole church of the Christians of India".

Thus what the Portuguese found when they came here was a church whose autocephaly had been restored and was functioning, a church adhering to the "Law of St. Thomas" which they did not want to exchange for any "Law of St. Peter" as the Portuguese demanded, a church using the East Syrian (Nestorian) liturgy in the Syriac language, possessing several books recently imported from Persia teaching some extreme Nestorian doctrines, acknowledging Theodore of Mopsuestia and Diodore of Tarsus as their teachers.

This church acknowledged no authority outside it, either of the Bishop of Rome or of the Patriarch of Antioch. It was probably concentrated around trading centres, like Tana (near Bombay-Salsette), Cranganore, Quilon, and Mylapore (near Madras). The North-West Indian branch of this church must have collapsed under the Islamic

conquests of the 11th and following centuries, all the people of present Afghanistan, Baluchistan, Pakistan and Kashmir becoming Muslims in the process.

It was the remnants of this wide-spread Persian-Syriac church that John de Monte Corvino visited in Persia, in India (Quilon and Mylapore) and in China in the 13th century.

The Catholicate of The East

The title and rank of Catholicos developed outside the Roman Empire, and is much more ancient than the title of Patriarch in the Christian Church. The title and rank of Patriarch developed first in the Roman Empire around the 4th and 5th centuries, and was later copied by others. There were three Catholicates in the early centuries before the title Patriarch became recognized in the 5th century: the Catholicos of the East, the Catholicos of Armenia and the Catholicos of Georgia.

The Catholicos of the East, first called The Great Metropolitan of The East, resided in Seleucia-Ctesiphon. Ancient chroniclers list the following as their Catholicoi before the council of Nicea:

1. St. Thomas the Apostle
2. Addai, the Apostle (Thaddeus, one of the Seventy?)
3. St. Haggai
4. St. Mari I
5. Abresu
6. Abraham I
7. James I
8. Ahadabuhi
9. Shahlupah
10. Baba

This was by far the largest church outside the Roman Empire, though there were several such churches of considerable size, not only in India, but also in Nubia, Armenia, Iberia (Georgia) and later in Ethiopia.

The church of Seleucia-Ctesiphon was apostolic in origin, and whether the preaching was done by St. Thomas, one of the Twelve, or by St. Addai one of the Seventy, the apostolic origin and dignity of the see of the Catholicate of the East has never been in question and was recognized at Nicea.

These early evangelists, i.e. St. Thomas, St. Addai, St. Mari and St. Haggai evangelized Persia, Mesopotamia, Media, Assyria, Parthia, Kurdistan, Babylon and other parts of west and central Asia. The

organisation and consolidation of these churches took time, and the credit for putting them together as a sort of a federation of several national churches co-ordinated by a Catholicos (the word means "general bishop") should go to Catholicos Baba. This process began towards the end of the 3rd century, (ca 282 A.D) and continued into the first years of the next century.

When in 399 Roman Emperor Arcadius sent the Mesopotamian Physician and Bishop, Maruta of Maipherqat as his personal envoy to the enthronement of Persian Emperor Yazdegerd, the Persian government began to give more respect to the christian church which it had previously persecuted. Bishop Maruta came back in 409-410 to help with the reorganisation of the Persian church. A great Synod of 40 bishops was convoked on February 1st, 410, and the faith of Nicea was accepted by the Synod of the Persian church. The quarrels among the various Metropolitans were settled. The Metropolitan of Seleucia-Ctesiphon was acknowledged as "the Great Metropolitan and Chief of All Bishops".

The jurisdiction of the Catholicos of the East was also settled at this Synod of Seleucia-Ctesiphon. Since we have the minutes of this Synod in the *Chronicle of Seert*, the full extent of that jurisdiction is now clearly known. Under the Catholicos there were six Metropolitans: Beit-Lapat (with four diocesan bishops, under him), Nisibis (with five diocesan bishops), Arbeles (six), Karka of Bet-slok (five), Fars (Perside) and Qatar (Bahrein and that region of the coast), and several other bishops in Media and other outlying areas. We do not hear at this time of any jurisdiction over the Indian church.

The Chalcedonian controversies had penetrated the Persian church. The Synod of Beth Lapat (484 AD) was the first stage in this controversy, when Metropolitan Barsauma of Nisibis called together a few bishops (after Catholicos Babawi had been killed by the state on the charge of corresponding with the Byzantine Emperor), and declared the Persian church to be Nestorian. Acacius became Catholicos in 485 A.D., who was more moderate than Bar Sauma, but continued a basically Nestorian theology. In 498, the then Catholicos Babowi assumed the title "Patriarch of The East" (sometimes also "Patriarch of Babylon").

The Nestorianism of this new Patriarchate of the East was certainly a mild one. As Patriarch Mar Babai (the great) put it:

"One is Christ, the Son of God,
worshipped by all in two natures.
In his Godhead begotten of the Father
without beginning before all time;

in his manhood born of Mary, in
the fullness of time, in a united
body. Neither his Godhead was of
the nature of the mother, nor his
manhood of the nature of the Father.
The natures are preserved in their
qnume, in one person, of one sonship"

The doctrine often ascribed to Nestorius – namely two persons and two sons – is not here. Babai's "Nestorianism" can be understood in an Orthodox manner.

During the period following Babai's reign, the theological school of Nisibis flourished, and it was during that period that "Nestorian" missionaries began coming to India and teaching their doctrines here.

Meanwhile those who opposed Chalcedon were not idle. The teachings of Severus of Antioch (ca 465-538) had also begun to penetrate the Persian church. Many in the Persian church were restive about the incipient Nestorianism of that church, however mild it may have been. With the renaissance of the pre-chalcedonian church under Jacob Baradeus (ca 500-578), the west Syrian tradition, emphasizing the "one united nature" christology spread widely in the Persian empire. The strong centres of resistance to Nestorianism were in the monasteries; the convents of Bar Sauma (established 5th century), Mar Matta (latter part of 4th century), and Mar Behnam (late 4th century), soon took up the cause of ante-chalcedonianism, which for them meant the same as anti-Nestorianism.

The Arab conquest of Syria and the Middle East took place around A.D. 640. The Pax Arabica allowed the west Syrian or anti-chalcedonian church to function legally – since the Arabs were unwilling to persecute any one group of christians as heretics. For them all were the "People of the Book" and so long as the christians paid their two taxes, the *Kharaj* (land tax) and the *Jizyah* (head-tax), they were all alike for the Arabs.

Thus in the seventh century there came to be three different Catholicates in the Persian Empire – one the original Persian church, a second started by the Byzantine or Chalcedonian Patriarch of Antioch with Byzantine imperial support, and the third the Maphrianate of the anti-chalcedonians. Syria, Mesopotamia and Persia were now governed as one caliphate. West Syrians were now free to come and reinforce the church in Persia. Thus Mar Marutha, a native Persian, trained in a Syrian monastery, was free to move to the convent of Mar Matta in Mosul. Marutha became the first "Maphriana of The East" in 629 and ruled for 20 years. Under his leadership the west Syrian church began spreading in the areas where Nestorianism previously held a monopoly (the Byzantine

Catholicate was privilege-ridden and lazy and never flourished at all). This church (later to be called 'Jacobite' by the Greeks, after Jacob Baradeus) assimilated the wisdom of the Greeks - in philosophy, mathematics, astronomy and other such subjects as well as the theology. It produced great scholars like Jacob of Edessa (633-708), the great grammarian-philologist, philosopher and exegete, the redactor of the currently used Syriac liturgy of St. James. This was also the church which produced Gregory Bar Hebreus (1226-1286) and Michael the Syrian (1126-1199) both of whom outstanding historians, as well as Dionysius Bar Slibi and Moshe Bar Kepha (833-903).

It is interesting to note that this west Syrian Catholicos (or Maphrian) of the East, had no jurisdiction at all over the Indian christians. It was the Persian or East Syrian or "Nestorian" Catholicos who extended his jurisdiction to India during the seventh and eighth centuries. The west Syrian or "Jacobite" Maphriana did not seek to establish missionary colonies in India during those centuries. The reasons for this are yet to be investigated. By the thirteenth century this Jacobite church under Arab rule had twelve Metropolitanates with over a hundred bishops spread over Syria, Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Arabia, but had no jurisdiction whatsoever in the Indian church.

The Maphriana (Catholicos) of Takrit ruled over eighteen episcopal dioceses in lower Mesopotamia and further east, but over none at all in India, as is clear from all the records. By the thirteenth century the 'Jacobite' Catholicate began to decline. The Mongolian invasions of that century saw the church flourishing at first, even converting some of the conquering kings like the Mongol Prince Hulagu. The advent of Timur (Tamurlane) in 1394 saw the devastation of these 'Jacobite' communities. The Catholicate (Maphrianate) fell vacant. It was restored again in 1401. But the decline was steady. By massacre, emigration and mass conversions to Islam, their numbers dwindled to less than 200,000 in the 19th century, and have been steadily decreasing ever since. The great monasteries were pillaged, and their invaluable treasures of documents put to the flames or otherwise vandalized.

The eightyfirst Maphrian or Catholicos, Belmam IV, died in 1895, and the west Syrian Catholicate in Persia came to an end with him, until a Catholicate was revived 17 years later in India.

The "Nestorian" Catholicate, which was invariably known as the Patriarchate of the East, or as the Patriarchate of Babylon, underwent a history much similar to that of the "Jacobite" Catholicate, except that it was transplanted to America by the "Boy Patriarch" Mar Shimeon in 1940.

CHAPTER IV

Pre-west

Before the Portuguese Came

The history of the Church in India upto the 14th century is obscure, poorly documented, and therefore understandably controversial.

The Syro-Malabar Catholics would claim that the Indian church was both East Syrian (Nestorian) and under the jurisdiction of the Pope. The Church of the East would claim that Indian Christians were always governed by the Patriarch of Babylon and never under the jurisdiction of Rome. Many Orthodox (and Jacobites) would claim that the Indian Church was West Syrian, under the jurisdiction of the Maphrian of the East in Persia. Others would claim that the Church in India was basically autonomous, receiving bishops indiscriminately from wherever in the Eastern churches they came - Tagrit or Babylon, Antioch or Alexandria, but not Rome or Constantinople.

The position of the East Syrians (Nestorians) has been summarised as follows, in an anonymous pamphlet published by the Narsai Press, Trichur.

"In summary, all the historians who have written on the subject agree in holding the view and demonstrating that the Malankara Church continued from the beginning under the jurisdiction and faith of the Patriarch of

Babylon, that this (jurisdiction and faith) began to decline with the coming of the Portuguese, and finally (the church) had in the end to merge with the Patriarchate of Antioch in 1665.¹

This view is basically corroborated by Fr. Mathias Mundadan, a Carmelite father of the Malabar rite (Roman Catholic), who after examining a mass of Portuguese documents, comes to the following conclusion:

“We can rightly say that till the arrival of the Portuguese, the St. Thomas Christians were living as if in two worlds – the geographical, political and social world of the Malabar region, and the ecclesiastical world which was more or less Chaldean in character, for the Chaldean prelates governed them; they shared the theological, juridical and liturgical traditions of the Chaldean church. They were so much attached to these ecclesiastical customs and traditions that they would not have even dreamed of an existence independent of that”.²

Among the Syrian Orthodox the common point of view was expressed by Mar Ivanios, one of their bishops who later joined the Roman Catholic Church to become the founder in India of the Malankara or West Syrian rite in that church. Mar Ivanios was of the view that there were four periods in the history of the Indian church:

1. from the beginning till 1490 A.D. - Jacobite
2. 1490-1599 A.D. - Nestorian
3. 1599-1653 A.D. - Roman Catholic
4. 1653 The Jacobite Church reestablished in India.

The terms ‘Jacobite’ and ‘Nestorian’ stand in need of some interpretation.

The term Jacobite is a malicious term imposed formally at the Second Council of Nicea in 787 (so-called seventh ecumenical) by the Greeks and Latins for those Christians who refused to accept the two-nature formula of Christology proposed at Chalcedon. They were called ‘Jacobites’ because they belonged to the party of Jacob Baradeus, (ca 500-578 A.D.) who was the Syrian Orthodox bishop of Edessa, and who strengthened that church through his indefatigable efforts in the face of Greek persecution.

¹ *The Malankara Church and the Nestorian Faith*, (Malayalam) Trichur, 1929, see P. 80.

² A. M. Mundadan, *The Arrival of the Portuguese in India and the Thomas Christians under Mar Yacob, 1498-1552*, Bangalore, 1967, preface p. x. The word ‘Chaldean’ is used for the East Syrians (So-called Nestorian) Church.

But the Syrian Orthodox opposed the two-nature formula at Chalcedon itself. Jacob Baradeus was born half a century after Chalcedon (451) and could not have been the founder of the group that stood against the Chalcedonian formula at Chalcedon itself. It is therefore unfair and unnecessary to call either the Syrian Orthodox or the Copts or Ethiopians or Armenians by the epithet 'Jacobite'. We should be more consistent if we use the terms "West Syrian" or "Syrian Orthodox" to denote this group in India. But the term 'Jacobite' is still used as convenient shorthand.³

Neither is the name "Nestorian" justified for the East Syrian Church, who prefer to be called "The Church of the East". Nestorius is not the founder of this church, nor was he their patriarch. He was the patriarch of the Greeks until excommunicated, and a monk of Antioch before that (from Germanicia in Euphratic Syria). We sometimes use that terminology here, without thereby implying that the Church of the East is committed to Nestorian Christology.

There is one point on which the three ancient churches agree - that for about a century i.e. from ca. 1490 to 1599 the church in India was governed by Persian bishops who came from the Patriarchate of Babylon (Church of the East).

Is there any evidence in the 6th to the 14th centuries about the church in India? What kind of a Church was it? We have a number of Western visitors during this period, whose testimonies do not always agree. We have also some knowledge of the church in the Persian Empire during this period - knowledge without which it is impossible to understand the history of the church in India.

One of the earliest witnesses is Cosmas the Alexandrian trader, the Nicopolite who came to the Malabar coast around 522 A.D. The masterly journal of his voyages, the *Universal Christian Topography* has the following to say:

"The Gospel has been preached throughout the world. This I state to be a definite fact, from what I have seen and heard in the many places which I have visited.

Even in Taprobane (Ceylon). there is a church of Christians, with clergy and a body of believers, but I do not know whether there are any Christians in the country beyond it. In the country called Male (Malabar?), where the pepper grows, there is also a church, and at another place called Kalliana (Kalyan, south of Bombay), there is moreover a bishop, who is

The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, an Anglo-Catholic reference book, is mis-informed on the origin of this church and the name Jacobite.

appointed from Persia.

In the island of Dioskorides (Socotra) which is situated in the same Indian sea, and where the inhabitants speak Greek, having been originally colonists sent there by the Ptolemies who succeeded Alexander the Macedonian, there are clergy who receive their ordination from Persia, and are sent to the island, and there is also a multitude of Christians. I sailed along the coast of this island, but did not land upon it. I met, however, some of its Greek-speaking people who had come over from Ethiopia.....

The island (of Taprobane) has also a church of Persian Christians, and a presbyter who is appointed from Persia, and a deacon, and all the apparatus of public worship. But the natives and their kings are heathens. The island.....is much frequented by ships from all parts of India, and from Persia and Ethiopia, and it similarly sends out many of its own (various ports in India) and to Sindhu. Sindhu is on the frontier of India for the River Indus.....forms the boundary between Persia and India.

Cosmas speaks of Christian churches in Ceylon, Socotra and the west coast of India. According to his information, three of these areas are under some form of Persian jurisdiction - Ceylon, Socotra and Kalyan. He mentions a bishop only in Kalyan. Whether he is a Persian or an Indian consecrated in Persia, it is difficult to say. He does not say precisely that the Christians of Malabar are in the Persian jurisdiction, though he explicitly says so in the case of the other three.

But even granted that the Christians of the Malabar coast, along with those of Socotra, Ceylon and Kalyan are in the Persian jurisdiction in the 6th century, the question remains: which Persian jurisdiction?

For there are at this time in Persia two rival churches, holding which people regard as opposite Christological dogmas - one the "Nestorian" Patriarch of Seleucia-Ctesiphon and the other the "Jacobite" Maphrian of Tagrit. Some knowledge of the background of these two churches seems essential to locate the faith and adherence of the Indian Christians in the 6th century.

The more numerous church in the Persian Empire without doubt was that of the Patriarch of the East. The Persian Church went through several periods of persecution under the various Persian and Parthian ruling dynasties. We have a Persian document almost contemporary with the account of Cosmas Indicopleustes, *the Chronicle of Arbela* (Arbil

¹ From Bks 3 and 11 of the Topography. Eng. Tr. J. W. McCrindle, *The Christian Topography of Cosmas Indicopleustes*. London, Hakluyt Society, 1827, cited by Wm. G. Young, *Handbook of Source Materials for students of Church History*. Serampore 1969. pp. 29-30.

written between 550 and 569. It is a Christian account of the bishops of Arbela (in Adiabene) from A.D. 99 to A.D. 540. The manuscript discovered by Alphonse Mingana in a church in Kurdistan was published by him under the title *Meshiha-Zakka*. A German translation of this was then published by E. Sachau⁵, which was then extensively used by Harnack for his work on the early history of Christian missions.

The Christians of Adiabene seem to have been continuously replenished by refugees from the Roman Empire where persecutions were even more frequently than in the Persian Empire. Many of these were Syrians; many others were Greeks.

Riwardashir, the capital of the southern province of Fars, became a Metropolitanate under Patriarch Yab-Allaha I (415-420) of Babylon. He was sometimes called the Metropolitan of Fars, at others, Metropolitan of India (and India), sometimes Metropolitan of Assyria. Later on in the time of Patriarch Isho-Yahb (650-660) a new Metropolitanate of Hind is created. Where in India this Metropolitan had his seat, no one can be sure.

Cosmas speaks about a bishop in Kalyan (near Bombay), who was consecrated in Persia. In 415/420 when a Metropolitan for India is appointed, the Church of the Persian Empire has not broken with the West Syrian Church. There are neither Nestorians nor Jacobites at that time. "John the Persian", who signed the roster of the Council of Nicea in 325, did so "on behalf of the churches in the whole of Persia and in the great India".

The Persian Church became autonomous in 424, soon after the Metropolitanate of India in South Persia is established. The main purpose was to escape the charge of being associated with the West Syrian Church with its headquarters in the enemy territory of the Byzantine Empire. Nestorius is hardly on the scene at this time. He became Patriarch of Constantinople only in 428.

The Synod of Dadisho which declared the autonomy called the *tholikos* of the East "Our Patriarch" against whom no one was allowed to appeal to any other Patriarch. The Persian Church had been seeking such autonomy at least from the time of Constantine. In 424 they gave their seal to it. The Church in Persia and in the adjoining India, from that time on is an autonomous church with its own Patriarch.

How much did the Indians know about this transaction? Probably very

⁵ *Die Chronik von Arbela. Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis des ältesten Christentums in Orient* in the *Abhandlungen der kgl. Preuss. Akademie der Wissenschaften*, 1915. No. 6

little. For they were neither in the Persian empire nor in the Byzantine

Only in 486 did the Council of Seleucia in the Persian empire adopt a creed which specified among other things that Christ who was to be worshipped in one Majesty, was of two natures united without mixture or confusion. This would please the Greeks and Persians, but not the Syrians who held to the one united nature formula. This creed of Seleucia is not "Nestorian" but speaks clearly of the One *Parsopa* (person) Christ.

The West Syrian Christians who held to the one (divine-human) nature of Christ set up their rival church soon after. Their strength was mainly in the Arab territories, and along the Byzantine frontiers of the Persian Empire. Their great theorist was Philoxenos of Mabbug (523). At this time the Metropolitan of Riwardashir (under whom was the Indian Church) was Yazdad, who refused to sign the Nestorianizing decision of 497.

476-519 is a period when the Council of Chalcedon is generally rejected in the Byzantine Empire. And it is significant that the Persian Empire found it convenient at this time to accept the two-natures formula more openly, as they did in 486 and again in 497.

The refusal of West Syrians of both the Chalcedonian formula and the Antiochean Christology of the Persian empire, made them a minority group. But they were quite strong around Riwardashir, and in the Arabian Peninsula.

Arbil is up north. There the two-nature Christians concentrated their strength. The South was strongly one-nature and this gave rise to several tensions within the Church of the Persian Empire. At the time when Cosmas wrote, the Bishop of Riwardashir who was also Metropolitan of India, was anti-Nestorian.

The Chronicle of Sa'ard⁶ (or Se'ert) speaks about Ma'na, (ca. 470) who must have been a predecessor of Yazdad, who translated the works of Diodore and Theodore (the teachers of Nestorius) from Greek into Syriac and tried to popularize them in Fars and India, as well as in the Arabian countries.

There is no reason to believe that any of these regions accepted the Theodorian teaching readily. In 520, the Arabians are definitely "monophysites" and are persecuted for their faith. The *Book of the Himyarites*⁷ compiled in Syriac in the first half of the sixth century is a

⁶ 2:9 (French tr. in *Patrologia Orientalis* 7, pp. 116-117).

⁷ A. Moberg, *The Book of the Himyarites*, Syriac Text with Eng. tr., Lund, 1924.

g-witness account.

Anyway, a hundred years later, Riwardashir and all the southern churches are still insubordinate to the East Syrian Patriarch of the East. Eight letters in Syriac, concerning the rebellion and schism of Shim'un Metropolitan of Riwardashir, have recently been published by Rubensaval, in C.S.C.O. Second Series Vol. 23. These are from Patriarch Isho'yahb III (650-660 A.D.). It is to be borne in mind that this was also a period of the Muslim expansion in Arabia and in the Persian Empire. The Christians were now becoming Muslims in large numbers. The kingdom of Oman was apostate.

Isho'yahb claims that the easy capitulation of the people of Shim'un Riwardashir was due to their earlier schisms and refusals to accept the teachings of Seleucia-Ctesiphon. The Metropolitan of Riwardashir is also accused of "closing the door of episcopal ordination in the face of the many peoples of India, and impeding the gift of God for the sake of perishable gains which feed bodily desire". "As far as your province is concerned, since your revolt against ecclesiastical canons, the priestly succession has been broken for the people of India. In darkness, far from the light of the Gospel, which is through the true episcopate, dwells not only India, which extends from the borders of the Persian Empire to the place they call Qalah, which is a distance of 1200 parasangs (4200 miles?) but also even your own region of Fars.⁸"

The reaction of the Metropolitan of Riwardashir and India, as well as the people of Qatar, was open revolt against the Patriarch. But this was not new. Mari Ibn Suleiman reports in his *Book of the Tower* (ca. 1140) that "indeed the Metropolitans of Fars who had gone before had never objected themselves to the authority of the Patriarch of the East".

It seems that it was this same Isho-Yahb III who took away India from the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan of Fars in Riwardashir, and made it an independent Metropolitanate directly under the Patriarch of the East.

The trouble with Riwardashir continued for the next two centuries, and even up to Timothy I (779-823). Bar Hebraeus (1226-86) west Syrian chronicler says that till the time of Timothy Riwardashir was dependent of the Patriarch of the East. Their argument, says Bar Hebraeus, was that they were the disciples of the Apostle Thomas, and could not be in the see of Mari.

Thus up to the beginning of the ninth century, the Church in India

was neither under the jurisdiction of the West Syrian (Jacobite) Maphriana of the East in Persia; nor could it have been ruled directly by the so-called Nestorian Patriarch of the East. If there was any Persian authority over the church in India, it was the Metropolitan of Riwardashir, and the evidence does not allow us to believe that this accepted the so-called Nestorianism of the Patriarchate of the East.

During this period the West Syrian Maphrianate took deeper roots in the Persian Empire, and this may have had something to do with the revolt of the South. From 609-628 the Patriarchate of the East was vacant. This was the time when Persian Emperor Khosrau II whose wife was a so-called 'monophysite', encouraged the west Syrian 'Jacobites' to come into the Persian empire and settle down there. They soon established dioceses in Persia, with a Metropolitanate (later called Maphrianate) at Tagrit. The Maphriana is the Vicar of the Patriarch of Antioch.

In 637 the Sassanid Empire fell to the Arabs. What we now have are two Christian minorities - one 'Nestorian' and the other 'Jacobite', both in a Muslim country. The Arabs favoured the Semitic 'Jacobites' against the Persian 'Nestorians'.

The Church in Fars, Bahrein and Qatar slowly disintegrated, until in the 11th century it had practically disappeared. The contacts with the Indian church through the Metropolitanate of Fars had already been discontinued, probably because the Persians asked for too much money from the Indians. Now that the Patriarch of Babylon took away India from the jurisdiction of Riwardashir, there were new possibilities for the Indians for other contacts.

The loss of the three southern regions to Islam must have acted as a fillip to the Persian church, for it was precisely when Islam was advancing from the south and the west that the Persian Church began spreading East in one of the most dramatic missionary movements of all time.

Islam gradually moved up from Medina to make Damascus and later on Baghdad its headquarters. Persian Christians rose to high positions in the Muslim government. Practically all the doctors, astronomers and philosophers in the court of Haroun-al-Rashid were Christians.

But at this time the Maphrianate of Tagrit ('Jacobite') also began to flourish. In 767 when the Nestorian Bishop of Tirhan wanted to build a church just outside the walls of Tagrit, he got permission to do so only after he was able to persuade his co-bishop in Nisibis to hand back a large church there to the Jacobites from whom the Nestorians had taken it years ago.

The Nestorian Chronicle of Se'ert records that Marutha (ca. 600 D.) of Tagrit, who later became the West Syrian Maphriana of the East, received gifts from India and China. Was this part of an Indian protest against the Nestorianizing doctrines of the Patriarch of Seleucia, and an attempt to record agreement with the Council of Ephesus which condemned Nestorius?

In the ninth century we hear of immigrations of Christians from Persia to India. There was an earlier migration, well attested in Indian documents as well as by Portuguese writers, in the 4th century when Thomas Kin'an came to India from Edessa, with a migrant colony of about 400* among whom was the Bishop Joseph of Edessa. This colony certainly was not 'Nestorian' and must have brought the original faith of the 4th century Syrian Church to India.

The second migration took place around the year 840 when two West Syrian bishops Mar Sabr 'Iso and Mar Peroz, came down with a colony of migrating families. The descendants of these families are now in the Orthodox church, though this does not prove that the original migrants came from the jurisdiction of the Maphriana of Tagrit rather than from the Patriarch of Seleucia.

The charters granted to these immigrants on copper plates have been preserved. The inscriptions are in Old Tamil, and have signatures of some of the witnesses in Kufic Arabic characters, and a kind of Persian in Hebrew script.

The two bishops are given jurisdiction, both civil and ecclesiastical, over the Thomas Christians. The Church in India grew and expanded during this time. The 'Persian crosses' now extant in Kerala as well as in Madras belong to this period. We have no way of being certain whether the Church in India followed the West Syrian or the East Syrian teaching and tradition at this time, or to what degree the Indian Christians understood the difference.

Neither do the several western testimonies about the Indian church in this period help us to make up our minds as to the identity of the particular branch of the Syrian tradition extant in India from the 5th to the 14th century.

Marco Polo, the Anti-Roman Venetian traveller tells us a great deal about the Church on the island of Socotra at the end of the 13th century. At that time it is a bishop under the patriarch of Baghdad who rules the church there. Marco Polo knows nothing about Christians in Malabar, though he writes about the tomb of St. Thomas in Mylapore. He is clear,

however that there are both Nestorians and Jacobites among Asiatic Christians.

Cardinal Jacques de Vitry's report from the middle East also comes from the 13th century, but is not based on first-hand knowledge. It describes the various Christian groups south of the Mediterranean. He is equally anti-Jacobite and anti-Nestorian. Only to the Armenians he is sympathetic, and therefore he does not class them with the Jacobites, to whom belong some 40 kingdoms including Egypt, Nubia, Ethiopia and all the countries as far as India.⁹

Burchard of Mount Zion, a German Dominican monk living in Jerusalem around 1280, describes Christian monks in all countries in the east, including India but not China, and says simply that they belong to the "Moronite, Jacobite, Nestorian, Greek, Syrian and other sects".

John of Monte Corvino, another Dominican friar, visited India on his way to China in 1293 where he became Latin Archbishop of Peking. But he has left no account of the Church in India.

In the fourteenth century we begin to have clearer and more detailed western accounts. Four Franciscan missionaries, intending to go to China, had got stuck in the Persian port of Taurus in 1320. There was there a Dominican friar Jordan Catalani, who had learned the Persian language well. Jordan joined the four Franciscans and went to India, landing in Thana near present Bombay in 1321.

He discovered small Christian communities there under a Persian allegiance, both in Thana and in Gujarat. The Persians had neglected them for long. He found these neglected Eastern Christians very susceptible to any form of Christian teaching. Jordan went back to Europe, gave an account of the Church in India to the Pope and King as well as to the public in his *Mirabilia Descripta*. He was consecrated bishop of Quilon (in Malabar) and sent back to India by Pope John XXII with three letters: (a) one to all the Christians of India, (b) another to Catholic converts from paganism or hearsay and (c) a third one addressed to the Nascarini Christians of Quilon. This latter title was the one commonly used by the Syrian Christians of Kerala to refer to themselves. Nascarini is the Latin form of Nazarani or Nazarene Christians.

These frequent visits of Latin Christians to India were facilitated by the fact that the Persian Churches, both Nestorian and Jacobite, were overrun by Monghol hordes in 1263. Latin missionary colonies now grew

⁹ Francis M. Rogers, *The Quest for Eastern Christians* Minneapolis 1962: P. 23.

set up in all the trading centres - Thana (Bombay), Quilon and Cranganore. The church and community built by Friar Jordan in Quilon now became the centre of Latin Christianity.

It is this incursion of the Latin Church into India in the 15th century that provides the occasion for the neglected Thomas Christians to take some initiatives. The Portuguese seemed to be anxious to break all contacts of the Thomas Christians with Persia. The Thomas Christians, on the other hand, saw clearly that their survival as a church with its own traditions, was dependent on contacts with Eastern prelates not under the obedience of Rome.

There is a Syriac document produced in India around this time that gives us a fairly reliable account of what transpired. The document is No. 204, taken by one Andreas Iskandar to Rome in the early 18th century. The story is as follows:

The Christians of India had been without a bishop for several generations. Their head was an Archdeacon. The Malabar Christians sent a delegation of three of their people, asking them to approach any of the Eastern prelates, in Seleucia-Ctesiphon (Persia), Antioch (West Syria), or Alexandria (Egypt) with a request to restore the episcopate in India. They set out for Baghdad. One of them died on the way. The other two met the East Syrian Patriarch at Gazirah, and were ordained priests by the Patriarch. They were asked to go to the monastery of Mar Avgen (Eugene) to select (and persuade) monks who could then be consecrated as bishops and sent to India. Two monks are chosen and consecrated as bishops - Mar Thoma and Mar Yuhanon. The two Bishops and the two Indian priests returned to India and were welcomed enthusiastically. They consecrated altars and priests, and the Syrian Church was thus restored at the end of the 15th century.

This is now clearly a church of the 'Nestorian' or East Syrian persuasion. From this point the history of the Indian church is clear.

Bishop Mar Thoma returned to Mesopotamia to report to the Patriarch. The previous Patriarch Simon V had died in the meantime, and his successor Mar Elias V (1502-3) consecrated three more monks from the monastery of Mar Augen as bishops for the Indian church - Mar Yahballaha, Mar Denha and Mar Jacob. These three accompanied by Mar Yuhanon reached India safely and the East Syrian Church was well-established in India by the first decade of the 16th century. It was this East Syrian Church which the Portuguese encountered on arrival, and which too many scholars merely assume to have been the shape of the Indian Church throughout pre-Portuguese history.

For a description of the contacts between the Indian Christians and the Portuguese, an able account has been provided by Fr. A. M. Mundadan, a Syrian Catholic Carmelite, in his *The Arrival of the Portuguese in India and the Thomas Christians under Mar Jacob, 1498-1552* (Dharmaram College, Bangalore, India 1967).

Struggles

CHAPTER V

Struggles

Against West Syrians and British

The letter of the Malabar Christians to Persian Patriarch Elias V (1502-1503) reports that there are some 30,000 families of Christians of the Eastern rite in Malabar. Malabar has some 20 towns at this period, chief among which are Kodungallur, Parur and Kollam.

The Portuguese are now in the coastal towns: the Eastern Christians are moving into the interior. The latter would have preferred to find some form of co-existence. They were not powerful enough to incur the displeasure of the Portuguese, nor did they want to follow their strange doctrines and practices. The Catholic friars on the contrary seemed to have been quite irritated by the non-cooperation of these 'Nestorian heretics'.

Mar Jacob, the Persian bishop from the monastery of Mar Augen, was their head. The Portuguese paid him a handsome salary, which the latter did not seem to mind, though he would avoid their doctrines. Mar Jacob died in 1549.

At this time there were Latin missionaries in Mesopotamia as well. The church there was torn by strife. One of the issues was the practice of hereditary succession to the Patriarchate from uncle to nephew begun in

1450, decreed by Catholicos Simon IV.

In 1551 Patriarch Simon Bar Mama died. His nephew Simon Denha VIII ascended the Patriarchal throne. A large segment of the Persian church refused to accept him. There may have been some encouragement from Latin Missionaries behind this move. A group of clergy and people led by three bishops who favoured union with Rome, assembled at Mosul, and chose a 40-year old monk called Sulaqa to become rival Patriarch Simon-Sulaqa. He went to Rome and received the Pallium from the Pope on 28th April 1553. He returned with two Arabic speaking dominican priests from Malta. He was arrested, imprisoned and died in prison 40 days after.

His followers elected a successor - Mar Abdiso. He could get confirmation from the Pope only on April 17, 1562. He accepted all the decisions of the Council of Trent (which was just then in its final session) in his confession of faith. This Romo-Syrian Patriarch Abdiso consecrated two bishops Mar Joseph and Mar Elias and sent them to India.

But by this time the Padroado had been established by Rome in Malabar, and the Thomas Christians were therefore to be under the Portuguese prelates. Here begins a conflict between three groups - the Latin prelates with their followers, Romo-Syrian prelates with their adherents, and the majority of the Thomas Christians who were led by their Archdeacon - leading up to the Synod of Diamper in 1599 and the Coonen Cross Revolt of 1653.

The fact that practically the whole body of the Thomas Christians joined the revolt of 1653 against Roman Catholic (and not merely Jesuit) supremacy, is often overlooked by Roman Catholic writers. The coming of the 'Jacobite' bishop Mar Gregorios in 1664 from Jerusalem was welcomed by all the Thomas Christians, though many of them went back to the Roman obedience in the decades that followed. The West Syrian Church now became established in India.

Mar Gregorios had confirmed the episcopal consecration of the Indian Archdeacon who now came to be known as Mar Thoma-I, and was head of the Orthodox in India.

In 1670 both Mar Gregorios and Mar Thoma-I died. The successor to Mar Thoma-I had been consecrated as Mar Thoma-II. There was at this time complete autonomy in all internal matters for the Indian Orthodox Church. The bishops were usually consecrated by their predecessors before death or by invited bishops from the Middle East. Mar Thoma-V

who ruled the Church till 1765 seems to have been something of an adventurer. He was negotiating with the Roman Catholics about joining their church, on account of certain conflicts with visiting West Syrian prelates. The negotiation broke down only because the terms offered by Rome were not acceptable to him. His successor Mar Thoma-VI (1765-99) also fell foul of the Syrian prelates and seems to have actually joined the Roman Catholic Church in 1799, only to recant shortly afterwards.

Travancore, the southern part of Malabar, was threatened by the invasion of Hyder Ali, a Muslem ruler from the neighbouring state of Mysore. The Dutch were threatening war against the Portuguese, as well as against the princely states of Cochin and Travancore where the Syrian Christians resided. Tippu Sultan, the ferocious Muslim warrior invaded the northern parts of Travancore. The British East India company captured the town of Cochin from the Dutch who had captured it as well as Quilon from the Portuguese in 1661-63.

The Indian Orthodox seemed at this time to be quite short of good ecclesiastical leadership. They had only one Metropolitan bishop for the whole of Malankara, and even he was often harassed by visiting prelates from the West Syrian church.

Their laymen were holding high status in the predominantly Hindu society of Malabar. The Syrian Metropolitan was always the unquestioned leader of a significant community. Despite large scale defections to the Roman Catholic Church, (thanks to the untiring efforts of the Jesuit 'missionaries' first and then later of Spanish Carmelite missionaries) the Syrian Orthodox numbered at least 200,000 at the end of the eighteenth century.

In 1795 the British captured Malabar from the Dutch, and 'liberated' it from the Muslim ruler Tippu Sultan who had conquered parts of Malabar and converted many to Islam. In 1806 the Marquis of Wellesley, the British Governor General of India sent the Revd. Claudius Buchanan, a high Anglican priest, to conduct researches into the life of the ancient church of St. Thomas in India, thereby inaugurating another new chapter in the life of that church.

Between the Roman Catholic Thomas Christians and the Orthodox Thomas Christians, the relationship was often and at least in many places, cordial. At least 18 church buildings were regarded as common property by the two groups.

At the coming of the British, the Metropolitan of the Orthodox Church was Mar Thoma-VI (1765-1808). In 1770 he had been

reconsecrated by visiting Syrian prelates and he assumed the title of Mar Dionysis-I. It was during his time that the four gospels were translated into Malayalam (the local vernacular) and printed on a very primitive litho-press.

It was during his time also that the Thozhiyur Church, to which reference has been made in the first chapter, separated itself.

The story of the 'Mission of Help' sent to the Syrian Orthodox Church by the British has often been told. The zealous British missionaries brought enlightenment and reform at many points, but also sowed the seeds of dissension. The old Seminary was at first the centre of their operations and later on the focus of contention. The Indian Orthodox Metropolitans cooperated with the Western missionaries in the beginning and gave them a remarkable measure of freedom to teach in the Orthodox Church.

The situation changed in 1830 when the new Orthodox Metropolitan became unfriendly towards the missionaries, though he cooperated with them in the distribution of the Malayalam New Testament. But the missionaries were suspected of organizing a party within the Orthodox Church who were soon to clamour for reform along the lines of the European Protestant Reformation. The missionaries had begun services in Malayalam at Kottayam using the Anglican prayer-book and were drawing away many Orthodox from their own churches.

A second generation of English missionaries had now practically replaced the first batch, and were vehement in their criticism, seldom tempered by knowledge or understanding, of the 'superstitious' customs of the Orthodox. This roused so much antipathy among the majority of the Orthodox laity that the Missionaries were sometimes manhandled.

A crisis developed. Anglican Bishop Wilson of Calcutta came as a mediator and offered a minimum "programme of reforms" to the Orthodox Metropolitan. The latter called together a Synod at Mavelikkara in January 1836. Only one priest agreed with the proposals of the Anglican Bishops. The council with virtual unanimity rejected the Wilson proposals. The Metropolitan forbade his people to associate with the missionaries on pain of ex-communication.

One of the proposals was that the Metropolitan should ordain as priests only those who had been graduated from and certified by the Seminary in Kottayam which was virtually controlled by the Missionaries. The Metropolitan now forbade Orthodox deacons to study at the Anglican dominated Seminary at all. The Missionaries were soon forced to leave the Seminary.

-In 1836 Anglican congregations were started, most of whose members formerly belonged to the Syrian Orthodox. This process led to the development of a certain xenophobia on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities of the Indian Orthodox Church. Had they not lost thousands of their people first to the Western Catholic church and now to the Western Protestant Church?

The demand for reform continued within the Orthodox Church, while the separated Anglicans became organized as a diocese of the Anglican church in 1878 (the Anglican diocese of Travancore). The stubborn refusal of the Orthodox Metropolitan to introduce any reform whatever soon led to the break-away of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church under the leadership of one of the teachers at the Seminary, the Priest Abraham Malpan. His Nephew, Mathew, a deacon and graduate of the seminary went to Syria and got himself consecrated as bishop in 1842, under the name Mathews Mar Athanasius.

A struggle, with the inevitable court litigation for church property so characteristic of the Syrian Christians of Kerala, ensued between the new bishop and the old one. Complaints against the reforming zeal of the new bishop reached the Patriarch of Antioch who sent Bishop Mar Kurilos in 1846 to investigate. Mar Kurilos was provided with plenipotentiary powers in the form of blank sheets signed by the Patriarch. He used the papers to declare himself as the lawful Metropolitan of India superseding both Mar Dionysius and Mar Athanasius. The former supported him in this move.

The British Government interfered, on the advice of the missionaries, to oust Mar Kurilos the Syrian, and to declare Mar Athanasius as lawful Metropolitan.

The final break came in 1875 with the arrival of the Syrian Patriarch himself in Travancore. A strong man with great personal presence and force of will, Patriarch Peter III made the British Government to rescind its approval of Mar Athanasius. In 1876 Patriarch Peter held a local synod in Mulamthuruthi, which made some strict regulations for the Indian Orthodox Church, and established the total authority of the Syrian Patriarch over the Orthodox Church in India. Malabar was divided into seven dioceses. Mar Dionysius Joseph, the ruling Metropolitan was put in charge of Quilon diocese, and six others consecrated for the other dioceses. Thus was first established the direct jurisdiction of the West Syrian Patriarch in India.

The court cases dragged on for another decade or more. When all was said and done, the reformed party was left as an independent church with

no relations to the Orthodox church. They had only a few parishes to start with, but have in recent years grown to become a very significant church indeed - the Mar Tomas Syrian Church, holding on to the name of Apostle Thomas.

The troubles of the Orthodox Church were by no means over with the separation of the reformist group. It had fallen to that church always to fight on many fronts, and thereby to develop a mentality of entrenchment and consequent conservatism. The Catholics on one side, the Protestants on the other, the reformers within on the third side, and the growing claims of Antioch for absolute control on the fourth - this is how the ecclesiastical leadership often imagined itself.

The successor of Patriarch Peter was Mar Gregorios Abdalla who had accompanied Peter to India and had thus first hand knowledge of the situation here. When Mar Dionysius V of India died in 1909 he was succeeded by a remarkably able prelate Mar Geevarghese Dionysius V, intelligent and learned in traditional Syriac lore, a man of courage and integrity. He had been to Syria and had been consecrated there as bishop by the Patriarch Abdalla. It was natural therefore that the Patriarch should pay a visit to India, now that one of his own consacrees was the leader of the Church here.

When he was in India however, he demanded that Mar Dionysius V should execute a document pledging complete obedience to the Patriarch. This Mar Dionysius refused to do, on the grounds that the Church in India was always autonomous, and that the Patriarch of Antioch had no business meddling in its internal affairs. Patriarch Abdalla reacted by excommunicating Dionysius and declaring his Indian colleague Mar Koorilos to be Metropolitan; Dionysius refused to comply and continued as Metropolitan. Thus began another litigation and wrangle in the Syrian Orthodox Church which lasted for some 50 years until 1958.

The Syrian Patriarch left India in October 1911. The next stage of development requires some understanding of the completely unstable situation in the Syrian Patriarchate at that time. In fact when Patriarch Peter had died, it was not Mar Abdalla who had been chosen Patriarch but rather Mar Abdel-Messih. But a Patriarch could not function without a firman or confirmation from the Turkish authorities in Damascus. As a result of ecclesiastical-political intrigue, the *firman* of Mar Abdel-Messih had been withdrawn and Mar Abdallah elevated as patriarch instead. But the withdrawal of the Turkish *firman* does not invalidate a consecration and Mar Abdel-Messih continued in Syria as a Patriarch without patriarchate.

The Metropolitan Mar Dionysius and his partisans reacted to his communication by inviting this Patriarch to India. Only his civil powers had been taken away by the Turkish Government. He was a patriarch in every other respect. He came here in 1912. He annulled the communication of Mar Dionysius. He was glad to agree to the establishment of a Catholicate in India. The Catholicate or Maphrianate of Persia was becoming defunct ever since the middle of the 19th century. There had been requests from India beginning at least in 1892 for the Patriarch of Antioch to transfer the Catholicate from Persia to some place in India where there were more believers. Patriarch Peter III had written that he would give favourable consideration to such an idea.

Now Mar Abdel-Messih acted in cooperation with Mar Dionysius. The Patriarch presided at the consecration of the seniormost of the bishops of India, Mar Ivanios, as Catholicos of the East, with the title Mar Baselios I. This was in September 1912 at Niranam, the site where the Apostle Thomas was supposed to have founded one of his seven churches. Mar Dionysius was living, but did not want to become Catholicos. He preferred to be king-maker.

Mar Abdel-Messih also consecrated a monk by the name of Remban unnoose to become Bishop Mar Gregorios, who later on became the third Catholicos in India and died only recently (in 1962) at the ripe age of 80. Among the many powers assumed by the Indian church was the right to consecrate their own Holy Chrism and their own Catholicos and bishops, thus making the Indian church completely autonomous. Whether a non-reigning Patriarch has the right to agree to all this is a disputed question. The Patriarch of Antioch had only purely titular powers left in this ordinance of Mar Abdel-Messih. He had to be invited for the consecration of a new Catholicos, but if he was unable to come, the Indian Bishops could consecrate him. As the Supreme Court of India said, the Patriarchal powers had again dwindled to vanishing point.

The new Catholicos was a mere figure-head, power being still in the hands of the Metropolitan of Malankara, Mar Dionysius. Catholicos Baselios I died in May 1914, and there was no attempt to consecrate a successor, since the Patriarch would have to be invited again for the consecration, according to the agreement. War had broken out in Europe, and this may have been an additional reason.

The Indian Orthodox were now divided into two factions. One group refused to acknowledge the actions of Mar Abdel-Messih, and adhered to the supremacy of Patriarch Mar Abdallah. These were called the

Patriarch's party or *Bawa** party. Those who sided with the Metropolitan of Malankara, Mar Dionysius and the Catholicos consecrated under his leadership, were called the Catholicos party or Metran party.

In 1925 Mar Dionysius and his partisans consecrated Bishop Mar Philoxenos of Kottayam as the second Catholicos in India. He took the name Mar Baselius Geevarghese I. His reign was also short-lived. He died after three years in December 1928.

A month later his successor the third Catholicos was elected. His reign of more than thirty years marks yet another important chapter in the chequered history of the Indian church. He was consecrated by Indian bishops on February 13, 1929, taking the title Moran Mar Baselius Geevarghese II. In his later years he became a well-known figure on the Indian scene.

This third Catholicos consecrated three other bishops immediately after his own elevation. One of them was Mar Ivanios, who had a remarkably impressive ascetic personality and was highly educated by the standards of that time, having a Master's degree from Madras University and a divinity degree from Serampore College. He later defected to the Roman Catholic Church, along with another bishop and a few priests, to reform the Syro-Malankara rite in the Roman Catholic Church in India. He had probably reason to feel unhappy in the Indian Orthodox church where the disputes between the Patriarch's party and the Catholicos party were going from bad to worse.

Metropolitan Mar Geevarghese Dionysius was still alive, and undertook a trip to Syria to meet the Patriarch there in order to settle the matters. Patriarch Mar Elias did not settle the dispute, but sent a bishop Mar Julius back with Mar Dionysius. Mar Julius had in his hand an order from the Patriarch annulling the excommunication of Mar Dionysius and he had been authorized to acknowledge Mar Baselius as Catholicos. Complete authority and jurisdiction would accrue to the Patriarch by such action.

Mar Julius fell out with Mar Dionysius and Moran Mar Baselius the Catholicos. The British Viceroy of India, Lord Irwin wanted to reconcile the factions, and himself met the Catholicos to seek avenues for reconciliation. Lord Irwin (later Halifax), a pious Anglican, also invited the Syrian Patriarch Elias to visit India in order to settle the dispute. Anglican Bishop Gore also tried his hand at reconciliation.

* *Bawa* or *Baba* means Pope or Bishop and is a title given by Indian Christians only to bishops of Syrian nationality. Indian bishops are called "Metran" which is short for Metropolitan bishop.

Patriarch Elias came in 1931, but he found the climate and the temperament of the factions much too hot for his taste. The poor man died during his tour of the churches and is buried in Omallur.

In April 1931 the Catholicos and the bishops on his side assembled at the Orthodox Seminary at Kottayam to consecrate the Holy Chrism – thus setting the final seal to the reasserted autonomous authority of the Syrian Church. There were at this time several bishops of the Patriarch's side who did not cooperate.

The Catholicos consecrated another bishop a few days later in the person of Mar Severios. He too joined the Roman Catholic Syro-Malankara rite soon after.

The death of Metropolitan Mar Dionysius in February 1934 led to new hopes and new anxieties. Hopes of peace were rekindled. There was anxiety about new litigations, since as Malankara Metropolitan the church property had been held in his name and not in that of the Catholicos.

The new Patriarch of Antioch, Mar Ephrem Severus, reputed for his scholarship and ability, asked the bishops on his side in India to seek avenues of reconciliation. The meeting of the two quarrelling parties took place at Kottayam on March 13, 1934. Strangely enough, they came to an agreement. All present signed. The provisions of this abortive agreement are quite significant. This agreement would have given more powers to the Patriarch than he was to receive according to the later settlement. The consecration of the Holy Chrism was to be his special privilege, as well as the right of a bishop in India to appeal to the Patriarch over the decision of the Synod in India to excommunicate him. Besides, the Catholicos would have been obliged to collect a head tax and hand it to the Patriarch.

There was one issue that was unresolved in the Kottayam meeting – recognition of the validity of the consecration of the present Catholicos by the Patriarch. This matter was to be settled directly by the Patriarch and the Catholicos.

In June 1934 Catholicos Baselios went to Syria with these agreed terms. Mar Julius the Syrian Bishop who had been in India since many years accompanied him to Syria. The Catholicos stayed in Jerusalem with the Anglican Bishop there, and entered into negotiations with the Patriarch. Obviously the Patriarch wanted more power than the agreement of the Indians was willing to give him. It is to be remembered that the Patriarch of Antioch never had any real direct authority in India.

till the 19th century.

In October 1934 Catholicos Baselios returned to India, frustrated and angry. Patriarch Ephraim branded the Catholicos a schismatic and excommunicated him.

In December 1934 a representative assembly of the Malankara Church was called together by the Catholicos and the Bishops on his side. The Indian Bishops in the Patriarch's party non-cooperated, though 200 parishes had been invited to send delegates - one priest and two laymen each - to the assembly. The assembly met and adopted a constitution recognizing itself to be a part of the universal Syrian Orthodox Church in which the Patriarch of Antioch was recognised as Chief Prelate. The Catholicos was also appointed Metropolitan of Malankara in place of the late Mar Dionysius. The recognition of spiritual authority of the Syrian Patriarch was a compromise in order to reconcile the people of the Patriarch's party in India.

Some eight months later the bishops of the Patriarch's side called together a meeting with representations of some 200 parishes and elected a rival Malankara Metropolitan in the person of the saintly Poulose Mar Athanasius.

Litigations between the two parties continued on one side and reconciliation efforts by many well-meaning outsiders and insiders on the other.

Many were praying incessantly for peace in the Church. Anglican bishop Pakenham Walsh retired from the episcopate in Assam and later from the Principalship of Bishop's College in Calcutta, to devote himself to the cause of prayer for the peace of the Orthodox church. He settled down with his wife in an ashram near Coimbatore, adopting a life of utter simplicity and poverty. The sanctity and sacrifice of this engaging Irish couple drew many Syrian Orthodox Youth from both sides to his ashram.

The bishop prayed and prayed and prayed, for all kinds of people including thousands of sick and lonely people, as well as for the peace of the Syrian Orthodox Church. There were others like him outside the Orthodox church who prayed sincerely for the Church.

Mr. K. C. Chacko, another Orthodox leader of intensive prayer habits, one of the co-founders of the Union Christian College, Alwayar, also devoted himself to prayer for the peace of the Church. Mr. Chacko died in 1947, amidst the strain (he had had one of his lungs removed years before) of trying to reconcile the two sides.

In 1949 some young people from both sides started a Peace League which found sympathetic response from ordinary people on both sides, though it was vehemently opposed by authorities on both sides.

Several conferences were held, several schemes proposed for conciliation; the bishops who knew something of the attitude of the Patriarch, were unwilling to accept these terms, regarding them impractical.

In 1954 the Peace League took a decision that a few people would enter into a public fast until peace was restored. One of those who thus fasted was Mr. K. E. Mammen, nephew of Mr. K. C. Chacko who had died, almost a martyr to the cause of peace, in 1947. Six people fasted near the Marupally in Kottayam, two of whom were priests, one a lay teacher, another a journalist, yet another a bus driver. Sixth was Mr. Mammen who came from the wealthier class.

The expression of popular concern was taken up by tens of thousands of the people of the Church, and every day large crowds gathered around the fasters, engaging in common as well as private prayers for the peace of the Church the whole day.

Finally the bishops on both sides agreed to the terms of peace which were then sent to the Patriarch. The fasters were informed by a responsible person that the Patriarch had agreed to the terms. This was however not true, as it turned out later. The fasters broke their fast, and there was rejoicing and thanksgiving in the church for quite some time, until it became known that the information about the Patriarch's agreement was false. People were so frustrated that there was fear of large scale apostasy or moving into the Roman Catholic church. But by and large the people were patient and continued in prayer.

Meanwhile the litigation about church property continued unabated. There was a law suit pending in the courts, which had been started as early as March 1938 in the Kottayam District Court. The process of litigation had begun already in 1913, initiated, strongly enough, by the British Secretary of State for India in the Trivandrum district Court. This inter-pleader suit was to decide who was to draw the interest on the amounts deposited in the British Treasury in the name of the Syrian Orthodox Community. There were two sets of rival trustees, one from the Patriarch's party and the other from the Catholicos' party.

The 1913 litigation had dragged on for years. In 1919 the District Court had given judgment in favour of the Catholicos party. All the money and the energy of the Syrian Orthodox Church for half a century

was wasted on this litigation which was in direct contravention of the words of the Apostle Paul*.

In 1923 the Travancore High Court gave judgment in favour of the Patriarch's party. A review petition was filed by the Catholicos side. The full bench of the High Court in July 1928 set aside the decision of 1923.

A fresh suit was filed by the Patriarch's party in August 1928 in the Kottayam district Court. The case was dismissed in 1931 on the ground that the commissioner appointed by the court to investigate the case had not been paid his fees. This decision was again appealed. This was the situation in which the Viceroy of India, Lord Irwin had sought to intervene.

The new, and unfortunately not final, litigation began in March 1938, this time by the Catholicos side. The petition was rejected by the court in 1943. An appeal went to the Travancore High Court. The appeal was granted. The three judges were divided two against one. The Patriarch side now filed a review petition in 1952. The case was heard again by the High Court.

After the breakdown of the Peace League reconciliation, the case was taken up for review by the Travancore High Court. The arguments for the appellants lasted from September 1955 till February 1956. At the juncture the Travancore State ceased to exist and was absorbed into the new Kerala State. A new High Court came into being and the case had to be heard again. On December 31st 1956, the Kerala High Court gave judgment in favour of the appellants.

Many of the plaintiffs and defendants in this atrocious history of lawsuits in the Church had died in the course of the litigation and were soon replaced by others.

In April 1957 a writ petition was filed in the Supreme Court of India along with an appeal over the judgment of the Kerala High Court. The final judgment of the Supreme Court was given on September 12, 1958 by its Constitution Bench. It was a unanimous judgment in favour of the Catholicos party.

On October 8th the Patriarch's side filed a review petition, through Mr. C. H. Dattari, the Solicitor-General of India. The grounds of the petition were that the judges were in obvious error. After having heard the arguments of this learned lawyer, the Chief Justice of India Mr. S.R. Das gave the following verdict: "Mr. Solicitor-General, there is no reason to

* Corinthians 6:1 ff

ew this case”

This was the signal for the vigorous and youngish new Patriarch of Antioch, Moran Mar Ignatius Yakub III to take decisive action. He had spent several years in India as a young monk and spoke Malayalam fluently. He knew that his partisans had little hope of continuing as a separate church. The Bishops on his side in India had unanimously recommended to him that he accept the Catholicos and grant autonomy to the Indian Church.

On December 16, 1958 letters were exchanged at the old seminary, Kottayam between the Patriarch of Antioch and the Catholicos of the East, accepting each other. The Patriarch was represented by the Syrian Bishop Mar Julius. All the bishops on both sides as well as a large number of people from both parties attended the occasion. The Patriarch accepted the Catholicos without reservation. The Catholicos acknowledged the Patriarch subject to the Constitution of the Indian Church.

It was in this relaxed setting that the Church elected Mar Eugene Chavara as successor to the reigning Catholicos Moran Mar Baselios Cleemis. The latter died in 1962 at the ripe age of 93. It was decided to invite the Syrian Patriarch Mar Ignatius Yaqub III for the enthronement of the new Catholicos. The Patriarch came in 1964, and there was a reconciliation between the two disputing parties. He was shrewd enough

Please read Sections **More recent developments** and **A New Patriarch in Syria** (pp. 43-52) after p. 67.

More recent developments

With the declaration of 3rd August 1974, the rupture between the two churches was complete, and communication virtually ceased.

Correspondence after that is formal, stiff, and legally oriented. After having rejected the “suspension order” of the Patriarch, the Catholicos

submitted that letter also to the Malankara Episcopal Synod. Meanwhile another letter had arrived from the Patriarch, No: 16/75 dated 11 January 1975, inviting the Bishops of the Malankara Church for a meeting of the "Holy Synod of the Universal Orthodox Church" to be held in Syria on 16th June 1975. The Bishops placed this letter also before the Malankara Synod. The purpose of this Synod was ostensibly to excommunicate the Catholicos and the Bishops of the Indian Church.

The Malankara Synod in its meeting of 4th February 1975, unanimously affirmed that all matters of faith, order and discipline affecting the Indian Church are to be decided by the Episcopal Synod here, according to the Constitution of the Church, and therefore that both the "suspension order" and the "Synod of the Universal Syrian Orthodox Church" were spurious and extra-legal. The Synod decided that none of its members shall attend any such meeting. These decisions were duly communicated to the Patriarch.

The Patriarch was advised by some of the bishops of his own church that it would be foolish to excommunicate the Catholicos and Bishops of the Indian Church, and that no other church or legal court in India would recognize such excommunication. Neither the Canon Law of the Church nor the Civil Law of India would concede such powers to the Patriarch. But obviously Patriarch Ignatius Yaqub went ahead with his plans.

Meanwhile on February 23rd, 1975, the newly and illegally consecrated bishops organised a mass rally in Ernakulam, giving people the impression that something very important was going to happen there. Two defecting members of the Malankara Episcopal Synod, Abraham Mar Clemis and Paulose Mar Philoxenos, attended this rally. Two resolutions were moved, and before the people could understand what was happening, were declared approved. The substance of the resolutions was to state that the Patriarch has the right and authority to take disciplinary action against the Catholicos, and to suspend him; and that since the Catholicos had been suspended, he and all the bishops with him should be repudiated by the people, unquestioning support being pledged to all past and future actions of the Patriarch.

The Malankara Episcopal Synod immediately sent a list of charges to the two defecting bishops. Witnesses were examined and the charges against the bishops were established. They were asked to state in writing that they would submit to the authority of the Synod. Mar Philoxenos stated in writing that he would not.

Now the Patriarch issued another insolent "order" dated 9th April

1975, addressed to the ruling bishops of the Malankara Church suspending" all of them except Mar Philoxenos and Mar Clemis who had defected to his side. The order also laid it down that all the ten dioceses then existing of the Malankara Orthodox Church were to be administered by the two defecting bishops.

The Malankara Synod met on May 9th 1975, the diocesan bishops (excepting the two defectors) having submitted their letters to the Indian Synod. The Synod issued another notice to the two defecting bishops demanding that they pledge allegiance to the Malankara Synod before 20th May 1975. They did not reply. The Synod met in emergency session on 22nd May 1975 and declared that the two defecting bishops had by their own actions voluntarily separated themselves from the Synod and had ceased to be Metropolitans of the Malankara Church or members of its episcopal Synod. Mar Philoxenos who had sent an insolent letter defying the authority of the Synod and the Constitution of the Church was declared expelled from membership in the Malankara Church.

Meanwhile the Syrian Patriarch was going ahead with arrangements for his "Universal Syrian Orthodox Synod" to excommunicate the Catholicos. He had so much opposition from his own Syrian bishops that he was afraid he may not have his way in the Synod. To ensure a majority support for himself in his own Synod he decided to ordain three more Indian bishops. Three Indian priests, none of whom would normally have been elected to the episcopate through constitutional channels, were summoned to Syria and made bishops. Fr. Kuriakose Mepral, Fr. C. M. Thomas and Ramban Yaqub were consecrated as Mar Kurilos, Mar Osthathios and Mar Julius respectively. The number of illegally and uncanonically consecrated Indian bishops now came to 6 and with the two defecting bishops, the Patriarch was sure of the support of 8 Indian Bishops in his Synod in addition to three or four Syrian bishops among his own bishops.

On June 16th 1975 the farce of a Universal Syrian Orthodox Synod was held in Syria. In the presence of the Indian bishops, the Syrian bishops opposing the Patriarch's actions (including the present Syrian Patriarch), kept silent about their criticism of the Patriarch. The Patriarch had his way. The Catholicos and all the legitimate bishops of the Malankara Church were now "excommunicated".

Even after such "excommunication" several of the Syrian bishops maintained the most cordial relations with members of the Malankara Episcopal Synod in ecumenical gatherings and on other occasions. Some of the "ex-communicated" bishops visited sister churches like the

Armenian, Ethiopian and Coptic churches, and the Malankara Church has continued in full eucharistic communion with these churches to this day.

The struggle with the Patriarch took its toll on the health of the aged Catholicos Eugen Baselius. In his 92nd year, he requested the Malankara Episcopal Synod to relieve him of his administrative duties. The Synod accepted the Catholicos' request and enthroned Dr. Mathews Mar Athanasius as Catholicos Baselius Mar Thoma Mathews I on 27th October 1975. Telegrams of felicitation and support were received from Pope Paul VI, the Armenian Catholicos Vazgen I, Ethiopian Patriarch Abuna Theophilus, Serbian Patriarch German, Russian Patriarch Pimen, Romanian Patriarch Justin and several others from sister churches all over the world.

Meanwhile on September 7th, 1975, the Patriarch presided at the enthronement in Damascus of the defecting Paulos Mar Philoxenos as Jacobite Catholicos. The Indian people knew about it only when someone here received a cable from Damascus three days later. Two months later, the Patriarch issued an "order" informing the people of India that he had thus enthroned a rival Catholicos. The Patriarch also divided the dioceses of the Indian Church to the bishops newly consecrated by him.

Now began a series of huge loyalty demonstrations, in the form of rival receptions to the rival Catholicos, sometimes with hundreds of thousands participating. Quite a large number of people must have participated in demonstrations on both sides. One of the biggest demonstrations on the Catholicos' side took place on February 15, 1976 in Ernakulam. Delegations from the Romanian and Armenian Orthodox churches were present. The number of people present at the public meeting was close to half a million.

A rival demonstration organized by the Patriarch's supporters had Syrian bishops present. The celebrations on March 1st saw again crowds numbering hundreds of thousands.

The Chief Minister of the Kerala Government Sri C. Achutha Menon issued an appeal to both sides to stop such expensive demonstrations and to engage in more constructive activities. Both sides formally welcomed the Chief Minister's appeal; and the big demonstrations subsided, at least for the time being.

Meanwhile a series of court cases were filed by both sides, claiming church property or requesting the court to forbid bishops of the opposite

side from entering their churches. As the number of civil suits grew beyond the number 200, a special Court was set up by the Government on July 9th, 1976, to hear these church cases. Attention was now focussed on the court cases rather than on the public demonstrations. The one is as expensive and wasteful as the other.

In September 1976, the new Catholicos, Baselius Mar Thoma Mathews paid a fraternal visit to the Orthodox Churches of Eastern Europe, mainly the American, Russian, and Romanian churches. In 1977 Patriarch Pimen of the Russian Orthodox Church paid a memorable visit to the Indian Church, and was given a rousing welcome.

Meanwhile there began a series of armed aggressions by the partisans of the Patriarch, who began violently taking over parishes. Many of the parishes now in their possession were thus violently taken over. The series of violent actions began to threaten the law and order situation in the State of Kerala and in June 1977 Kerala Chief Minister A. K. Antony called both parties and tried for a peaceful settlement of property disputes. Despite the efforts of a Cabinet sub-committee specially appointed for this purpose including the Chief Minister, and Mr. C. H. Muhammad Koya (Minister of Education), Mr. Baby John (Minister of Revenue), Mr. K. M. Mani (Minister of Interior) and Mr. P. K. Vasudevan Nair (Minister of Industry), no agreement could be arrived at.

Violence continued. The automobile of H. G. Philipos Mar Theophilos, the Metropolitan of Malankara was set fire to inside his garage, at night, by vandals. Court judgements in favour of the Catholicos' side could not be implemented, due to vandalism and violence. There was violent aggression in many centres.

By the beginning of 1978 the law and order situation became very critical around Alwaye. An army of women and priests were directed by the Patriarch's supporters to take over the Alwaye Seminary, the seat of Metropolitan Mar Theophilos. This was in violation of a Government decree forbidding the assembling of more than 5 people in the area. On the 2nd of January 1978, the women police of the state had to bodily remove 3591 women. The police had also to remove physically 94 priests (many of them recently ordained) who took part in the illegal violent aggression against the residence of a bishop and his chapel.

The Catholicate side then resumed demonstrations of protest against violent aggression. The Patriarch's supporters organised a "Great March" to take over the Alwaye Seminary, but were stopped by the police from doing so. There was also a violent attack on another church institution, a hospital, and even the patients were attacked and injured;

the vehicles of the police which tried to stop the aggressions were burned. Passenger buses were burned. There was an attempt to destroy an Orthodox Church in Parakkode by dynamite explosion.

Leaders of all the Christian Churches in Kerala made a joint appeal to the aggressors to cease from this violence (on 10th January 1978). The State Cabinet subcommittee its efforts for a settlement, but without any success.

A New Patriarch in Syria

Patriarch Ignatius Yakub III died in 1981, and Mar Severus Zakka, an ecumenically minded Syrian bishop who was also member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches became the new Patriarch. It was well known that he was opposed to the policy and actions of his predecessor, and was sincerely disposed to settle the Indian dispute. He had spoken about this personally to the present writer several times before his election and enthronement.

Subsequent experience has shown that despite all goodwill the new Patriarch Ignatius Zakka was as inexperienced as he was ill advised. He did not contact or consult anyone on the Catholicos side before planning his trip to India. He did not reply to the messages of personal felicitations sent to him by three of the bishops on the Catholicos side - Dr. Philibose, Mar Theophilos, Geevarghese Mar Osthathos and Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios, all his personal friends - on the occasion of his enthronement. It is conceivable that the Syrian post and telegraph system is worse than the Indian, and that the Patriarch did not receive any of these messages.

When news came through Indian newspaper announcements that the Patriarch was setting out for India Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios sent him a personal letter suggesting that he should take three positive steps before coming to India. First he should withdraw the illegal and uncanonical excommunication of the Catholicos and Bishops in the Indian church. Second, he should make a statement acknowledging that St. Thomas, one of the Twelve was a full Apostle, with fullness of the priesthood, since his predecessor's denial of that was the root cause of all the trouble. Thirdly he should formally inform the Catholicos and the Malankara Synod that he was coming to India and that he was anxious to effect a settlement of the dispute. There was no reply to this letter.

A cable was sent to him by H.H. Catholicos Mar Thoma Mathews stating that a slight postponement of his visit would help in preparing the way for a settlement. To this also there was no reply.

Patriarch Mar Ignatius Zakka arrived in India, and took one step of

goodwill. He went to the tomb of St. Thomas in Mylapore, Madras and prayed there before coming to Kerala, thus making clear that he respected St. Thomas. But his predecessor, who denied that the Apostle was a priest, could also have probably gone to Mylapore and prayed. The issue was not whether the Patriarch respects one of the Twelve Apostles or not. If he did not, that would not be to his credit. The question was whether Patriarch Ignatius Zakka believes that St. Thomas had the gift of priesthood or not. On this crucial point he has not expressed himself so far, and there can be no settlement of the dispute without settling this point. If he also believes like his predecessor that St. Thomas the Apostle does not have the fullness of the priesthood, the Malankara Church could not want any relationship with him.

The Patriarch received a rousing welcome from the people of Kerala, including the other Christian and non-Christian communities here. This was not because they were all supporters of the Patriarch's party. It was only a sincere expression of a desire on the part of the Hindu, Muslim and Christian communities here to see this unfortunate dispute settled. They saw the coming of the Patriarch as a sign of hope. The propaganda was so intense that he was in fact coming to effect a reconciliation or settlement. But the Patriarch got the impression from the receptions that all the people of Kerala are his supporters, that would be a sad mistake. They are not his supporters; they are sincere supporters of peace, of a peaceful settlement of an unfortunate dispute in the Orthodox Christian Community of India.

His chief advisor, speech writer, secretary, Man Friday and stage manager in India was Mr. Babu Paul, an Indian Administrative Service officer, who has now emerged as the chief lay leader on the Patriarch's side. Whether it was his fault or not, the Patriarch's opening gambit on arrival in Ernakulam was a fat diplomatic error. He stated in a paternalistic statement as reported in the press, that he was prepared to receive the erring bishops and people of the Catholicos' side, like a loving father, if they would turn to him in repentance. A more unfortunate opening gambit is unimaginable for one who wants to reconcile people who feel deeply grieved about the many misdeeds of his predecessor. He realised soon that he had made a mistake; in his Kottayam address on February 20th, 1982 as reported in the Press, he made a slightly better statement, more respectful and genuinely conciliatory. To this there was a public response from the Catholicos side in the form of a press statement, issued by Mr. E. J. Joseph, the Secretary of the Malankara Orthodox Christian Association, giving the views of the Malankara Episcopal Synod in response to the Kottayam statement where the Patriarch stated that he was prepared to "forget and forgive"

"If this statement can be considered a genuine declaration of the Patriarch in order to achieve peace in the Church, the Synod feels that it is an occasion for rejoicing. The Malankara Church was always ready for peace. The recognition of the Patriarch in 1958 subject to the constitution of the Malankara Church, in the wake of the Supreme Court decision, and inviting the Patriarch to participate in the enthronement of the Catholicos in 1964 in accordance with article 114 of our constitution were signs of the desire for peace."

After having listed many of the violations of the constitution and Canon Law by the previous Patriarch the Catholicos' side statement continued to say that declarations by themselves were not enough to effect peace, "but had to be followed up by correction of previous errors and concrete steps for peace."

This was a highly positive response on the part of the Catholicos' side, which explicitly promised "full co-operation will all creative steps for peace in the Church".

But no such creative steps were taken by the Patriarch. Vestibular interests kept the Patriarch well protected from meeting any of the responsible people on the Catholicos side. Many were anxious to see that the Patriarch should never get to hear the views of the Catholicos side.

It was in this context that the present writer sent a letter to the Patriarch while he was in Trichur, and anticipating that it may never reach him, released it to the press.

The text of this letter dated March 10th 1982 is given below:

An Open Letter to the Syrian Patriarch dated 10-3-1982

Your Holiness,

Even apart from our personal friendship, we should be able to communicate with each other by means other than the columns of the public press. Only because direct communications have failed to elicit any response from your Holiness, I am resorting to this way of getting in touch.

I have no reason to believe that Your Holiness' purpose in planning this visit at this time was to help re-establish peace in the Indian Church. For had it been so, Your Holiness would have contacted us before announcing your visit and made some preliminary explorations as to the steps we could take together for peace in the Indian Church. As it is, we knew about your proposed visit only from the public press. We are not persuaded that you came mainly to consolidate your followers for a more concerted fight against the Malankara Orthodox Church.

Your Holiness has not repudiated or corrected any of the actions of our predecessor which led to all the present problems in the Indian Church. Your predecessor, in his letter no. 203 of 1970, made the incredible statement that St. Thomas was not a priest and that he had no apostolic throne. You did well in going to the tomb of St. Thomas in Mylapore to pay your respects to the holy Apostle and Patron Saint of India. But you did not make a clear statement about the Apostle's priesthood and throne.

Your predecessor tried to foist an "Apostolic Delegate" on our Church without consulting us and against the unanimous request of the Synod. You have not apologized to us for this uncanonical act which was an affront to our dignity as a Church, and have further insulted us by including the aforesaid "Apostolic Delegate" in your official delegation.

Your predecessor violated all canons and the constitution of the Church by consecrating a rival Catholicos and rival bishops here. You have not so much as expressed a word of regret in public about this, though you have often told me in person that this was a huge error on the part of the late Patriarch Ignatius Yaqub.

Your predecessor did not, however, do some of the uncanonical things you have done now. He did not enter the territory of the Catholicate except by unanimous invitation. He did not consecrate Holy Monks here. You seem to have thus outdone your predecessor in violating canons. I am prepared to believe that you were pressured into doing many of the things you have done. But that does not make your Holiness less responsible for your actions, which have such long-term consequences.

You have not taken any initiative to contact us before your visit or during your visit. You have refused to reply to my messages and letter. Perhaps it is not too late yet for your Holiness to make contact with our Church.

I want Your Holiness, and our sister communities in India to know that the Malankara Orthodox Church has not violated any of the canons of the Church. We are anxious for peace. We want a just and legitimate settlement of all disputes. We need, however, more cooperation from your Holiness and your followers, if peace is to come to the Orthodox Church in India. I for one sincerely hope that you will so cooperate, when left to your own counsel.

Your Holiness' brother in Christ

Sd/-

*Paulos Gregorios
Metropolitan of Delhi and the North.*

There the matter rests, as of this writing. There has been no written communication whatsoever from the Patriarch, as far as I know, to any responsible person on the Catholicos side, before, during, or after the Patriarchal visit to India. All the communications from the Catholicos side addressed to the Patriarch have failed to find so much as an acknowledgment.

The seventieth anniversary of the re-establishment in India of the Catholicate of the East is being celebrated all over India as this work goes to press. Nearly all the important churches of the world are represented at the World Council of Churches, Pope John Paul II, Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios, Russian Patriarch Pimen, Romanian Patriarch Justin, Bulgarian Patriarch Maximos, Armenian Catholicos-Patriarch Vazgen, and Ethiopian Patriarch Abuna Takle Haimanot have all sent delegations to represent them. The Catholicos-Patriarch of Georgia is present in person. Messages of congratulation and felicitation are coming in from several churches all over the world.

Let us hope that after the seventieth anniversary celebrations there would be some renewed efforts to settle this unfortunate dispute in the ancient church.

The Present Dispute

CHAPTER VI

The Present Dispute

Everyone admits that the present dispute in the Orthodox Church of India is as unfortunate as it is unchristian. Even non-Christians have shown, along with the judicial courts of the country, a great interest in the settlement of this dispute. Some knowledge of the antecedents of the dispute and the main issues involved should be of wide interest among our people as well as abroad.

Historical Resume

As far as we can discover, only with the Mulanthuruthy Synod of 1876 does the Syrian Patriarch begin to assert direct authority here. Patriarch Peter III consummated a process which began in 1686, when Mar Ivanios (John) the West Syrian prelate came here. The latter began a process of what he explained as going back to the pre-Portuguese, pre-Roman days. He introduced West Syrian customs like fasts, feasts and leavened bread for the Eucharist. The Indian Orthodox, who had been forcibly introduced into the Roman Catholic Church by the Portuguese imperialists at the Synod of Diamper (1599 AD) and had revolted in 1653 at the famous Coonen Cross Revolt, were looking for an alternative structure to the Roman Catholic one which had been imposed on them. The East Syrian Church had already been partly brought into Roman obedience. The West Syrian structure was the only alternative available to

them. They therefore welcomed the West Syrian Bishop Mar Gregorios who came in 1664 from Jerusalem and lived in India till 1670. But he did not rule the Indian Church. That responsibility was vested in the Indian Metropolitan Mar Thoma I who also died in 1670, at around the same time as the Syrian Mar Gregorios.

This was a period of great turmoil for Kerala. Cochin and Quilon, the two chief Christian-settled cities had been captured by the Dutch from the Portuguese in 1661-63. Portuguese were getting weak, but the Indian Orthodox feared the Protestant Dutch as much as the Roman Catholic Portuguese. Between the Scylla of Western Catholicism and the Charybdis of Western Protestantism, the only option available was the Orthodoxy of the Syrians, because (a) they were of the same faith as the Indian Orthodox and (b) they had no imperial power behind them.

The Syrian Patriarch in the 19th century i.e. in 1876 convened the Mulanthuruthy Synod, from which time the Syrian Church began its direct jurisdiction in India. The main events that affected the history of the Indian Church since 1664 can be listed as follows:

1664 AD. Arrival in Malabar of Mar Gregorios of Jerusalem, belonging to the West Syrian Church, who tries to introduce west Syrian feasts and fasts, as well as liturgy, and finds resistance. The main change effected is from unleavened to leavened bread. Unleavened bread had been introduced by the Portuguese and the Spaniards.

(Refce: Letter of Fr. Bras de Azvedo S.J. to his Provincial in Portugal, dated 28th July 1666, partially reproduced in *The Examiner, Bombay*, 14th May 1938, p.294. Letter of Mar Gregorios to the parish priests of Mulanthuruthy, Kandanad and Parur, see E. M. Philip. *The Indian Church of St.Thomas*, pp. 160-164)

1685 AD. Maphriana Mar Baselius and Bishop Mar Ivanios arrive from the West Syrian Church. Tension arises between Metropolitan Mar Thoma IV and the Syrian prelates as the latter seek to interfere in internal administration. The Antiochene or West Syrian liturgy is slowly introduced.

1693 Mar Ivanios dies, and Mar Thoma IV quietly shifts to the West Syrian liturgical practices.

1705 Mar Gabriel from the East Syrian Uniat Church arrives in India, and comes in conflict with Mar Thoma IV as the former tries to reintroduce the East Syrian Liturgy and two-natures Christology.

1709 Mar Thoma IV asks West Syrian Patriarch to send liturgical and

theological books (Letter in Charles Schaaf, *Relatio Historica*, Leiden, 1714. Eng. Tr. in Thomas Yeats, *Indian Church History*, London, 1818, pp. 152-154, cited in George Menachery (ed) *The St. Thomas Christian Encyclopedia* vol. 2, pp. 85-86).

1720 Mar Thoma IV writes again to West Syrian Patriarch requesting for prelates and literature. Letters of 1709, 1720 and others transmitted through the Dutch and intercepted by Roman Catholics are now in the archives of Rome. (See G. T. Mackenzie, *Christianity in Travancore*, Trivandrum, 1901, and *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana*, Vol. 4 Rome 1728, pp. 466-467).

1729 Mar Thoma V writes to the Dutch Governor affirming one united nature Christology, and acknowledging the teaching authority of the West Syrian Patriarch. Meanwhile, he also negotiates union with the Roman Pope.

1781 Mar Dionysius I, Metropolitan of Malankara negotiates union with Roman Catholics (in order to be free from visiting West Syrian prelates?)

1788 Mar Dionysius gives up idea of reunion with Romans and returns to the West Syrian connection.

1789 Invasion of Travancore by Tippu Sultan. The Rajahs seek the help of the British in order to defend themselves.

1791 The Cochin Rajah becomes a vassal of the British.

1795 The British occupy Cochin

1811 The Printing Press introduced at the Syrian College (present Old Seminary).

1813 The Syrian College begins functioning.

1816 Anglican Church Missionary Society begins its activities inside the Orthodox Church using the Syrian College. Some reforms like marriage of clergy accepted.

1825 At the request of Indian Metropolitan Mar Dionysius IV, the Syrian Patriarch's envoy Bishop Mar Athanasios arrives, and insists on de-vesting and re-ordaining the two Indian bishops Mar Dionysius IV and Mar Philoxenos of Thozhiyur - since they had not been consecrated by the Syrian Patriarch. Athanasios proves to be an avaricious extortioner, and the British deport him. Mar Dionysius IV dies and is succeeded by Cheppad Mar Dionysius.

1828 Anglican missionaries translate the Book of Common Prayer into Malayalam, and begin to conduct services for the Orthodox according to Anglican usage, in the Seminary Chapel. Cholera breaks out, and the Seminary is closed!

1834 The British are virtually in control of Malabar, Cochin and Travancore (the three constituent units of present Kerala). English education begins.

1836 Muslim-Hindu communal clashes (Mopla riots) begin in Malabar, caused primarily by extreme poverty and misery of Muslim peasants exploited by Hindu landlords with British support.

1836 Anglican Bishop Daniel Wilson of Calcutta is brought down to Kerala by the British, and proposes a seemingly reasonable six-point reform formula to the Orthodox - which is unanimously rejected by the latter, at the famous Mavelikkara Synod. The main decision of the Synod: "We would not follow any faith or teaching other than the Orthodox faith of the Jacobite Syrian Christians to the end, that we may obtain salvation through the prayers of the ever happy, holy and ever blessed Mother of God, the redresser of all complaints, and through the prayers of all saints - witness Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, Amen". (The real fact is that if the six point formula were accepted the Orthodox Church would have come under foreign missionary control economically, administratively and theologically).

1840 The Anglican missionaries leave the Orthodox Seminary, taking half the property with them and move to the site of present CMS College and High School in Kottayam. They take also Orthodox people with them and start a separate Church, then called the Church Missionary Society Church!

1837-43 Meanwhile one of the Indian teachers at the Orthodox Seminary, (Abraham Malpan), deeply influenced by the ideas of the missionaries, tries his own liturgical and theological reform along Protestant lines. He sends his nephew, Deacon Mathew, to Syria and the Syrian Patriarch keeps him there till 1843, when he was sent back to India as Mathews Mar Athanasius Metropolitan of Malankara, with authorisation from the Syrian Patriarch to rule over the Indian Church.

1843 Mar Dionysius IV, refuses to acknowledge the new Metropolitan and protests to the Syrian Patriarch.

1846 Patriarch sends Mar Kurilos to investigate, and to take action (provided with signed blank sheets). Kurilos uses these to declare himself as Metropolitan of Malankara.

1852 On the basis of an appeal from Mar Athanasius, the British declare Athanasius to be rightful ruler of the Indian Church.

1853 Syrian Patriarch sends another bishop Stephanos Mar Athanasios, to rule the Malankara Church jointly with Mar Dionysius and Mar Kurilos - a triumvirate of two foreigners and an Indian! Stephanos is ejected by the British.

1865 An Indian priest, Fr. Joseph, goes to Syria and gets ordained by the Syrian Patriarch, and is now consecrated as bishop and sent to India - also as Malankara Metropolitan Dionysius V! Mathews Mar Athanasius, with British support, resists the attempts of Mar Dionysius V to oust him, and as the conflict becomes not only acute but also lop-sided Mar Dionysius asks Patriarch Peter himself to come, to counter-balance the weight of British support.

1868 Mathews Mar Athanasius and Mar Kurilos of Thozhiyur together consecrate another bishop - the son of Reformer Abraham Malpan as Thomas Mar Athanasius. Syrian Patriarch Peter III refuses to recognise him. Thomas Athanasius takes up residence in Old Seminary.

1874-75 Patriarch Peter III goes to London, sees Queen Victoria and comes to Malabar with letters of authority from the British. On arrival here he excommunicates Mathews Mar Athanasius.

1876 The Mulanthuruthy Synod - Present: Patriarch Peter; accompanying Syrian bishop (who later became Patriarch Abdulla); Joseph Mar Dionysius V (Metropolitan of Malankara); Representatives of 102 Indian parishes. The Malankara Metropolitan is only 39 years old, while Patriarch Peter is 76 and a towering figure who dominates the Synod. Also present is Kattumangattu Ramban, 28 years old, as interpreter (later canonised as St. Gregorios). Patriarch demands letters from each parish pledging obedience to him. Only about ten parishes execute such document. Synod decrees signed by 279 people. The Malankara Association constituted with Patriarch as Patron and Malankara Metropolitan as President.

1876 Patriarch Peter tries to persuade British to declare Mar Dionysius V as lawful Metropolitan, since he had excommunicated Mathews Mar Athanasius. British refuse, withdraw recognition of Mar Athanasius and ask the Indian Christians to approach the civil courts to decide who is lawful Metropolitan.

1877 Mathews Mar Athanasius dies.

Patriarch consecrates four bishops at Paravur including the saintly Mar Gregorios of Parimala.

1879 Anglican Diocese of Travancore founded, mostly with prosely from the Orthodox.

1879 Major suit filed in Travancore civil courts against Mar Thomas Athanasius by Mar Dionysius V. The argument of Mar Dionysius was that the Malabar Church was from ancient times under the Syrian Patriarch and since Thomas Athanasius was consecrated without his permission, he could not be legal bishop, and should leave the Seminary (hence called Seminary case).

1899 End of ten years of litigation, in which the District Court, the High Court and the Court of Royal Appeal give verdict in favour of Mar Dionysius and against Mar Thomas Athanasius. The Mar Thomas Church separates itself from the Orthodox.

1906 The Turkish Government (Sublime Port) withdraws its recognition (*firman*) of Syrian Patriarch Abdal-Messih, and the Church enthrones as Patriarch Mar Abdalla Sattuf, who had visited India with Patriarch Peter.

1908 2 Indian monks are sent to Syria and are consecrated as bishops: Georgis Mar Dionysius VI (Mallappally) and Mar Koorilos.

1909 Dionysius V dies, and Dionysius VI, an able scholar and administrator becomes Malankara Metropolitan. Patriarch Abdalla, irritated by his independent spirit and comes to India to snub him, and demand authority over the property and finances of the Indian Church. Mar Dionysius having refused to hand over temporal power, Patriarch Abdalla excommunicates him and appoints the other bishop consecrated by him, Mar Koorilos, as Malankara Metropolitan. The people are divided into supporters of the independent Mar Dionysius and the Patriarch-supported Mar Koorilos. This is the beginning of the present dispute.

1911 Beginning of new litigations from the contending Metropolitan and their parties (series of litigations which came to an end in 1958 with the Supreme Court Judgment).

1912 Mar Dionysius VI invites Patriarch Mar Abdel-Messih (whose *firman* had been withdrawn by the Turkish Government, due to Church intrigue) to visit India.

1912 Sept. 12 Abdel Massih presides at the elevation of senior-most Indian bishop Paulos Mar Ivanios as Catholicos of the East; an autonomous church with power to consecrate local bishops as Catholicos, but still recognizing the spiritual authority of the Syrian

Patriarch is constituted.

1914 The First Catholicos passes away.

1917 Mar Koorilos, the Patriarch's Party's Malankara Metropolitan dies. Paulos Mar Athanasius takes his place. The District Court gives judgment in favour of Mar Dionysius. Paulos Mar Athanasius appeals to the High Court.

1923 High Court gives judgment in favour of Patriarch's party and says the excommunication of Mar Dionysius by Patriarch Mar Abdalla is valid. Mar Dionysius and his supporters appeal to the Royal Court of Appeal in Travancore.

1923 Mar Dionysius undertakes a journey to Mardin, the seat of the Syrian Patriarch. Both Mar Abdalla and Mar Abdal-Messih have died and been buried with patriarchal honours. Dionysius negotiates with the new Patriarch Mar Elias for a settlement of the dispute out of court. The Patriarch removes the excommunication of Mar Dionysius, and sends his delegate Mar Julius to accompany Mar Dionysius to India, in order to effect a settlement. On arrival in India Mar Julius refused to publish the order of the Patriarch removing the excommunication of Mar Dionysius.

1925 The Second Catholicos, Mar Philoxenos of Kottayam is enthroned, as Baselius Geevarghese.

1926 Mar Dionysius meanwhile gets a favourable judgment from the High Court, which after reviewing the previous judgment, gave verdict that the excommunication of Dionysius was invalid.

1928 The Second Catholicos dies after a surgical operation.

1929 Geevarghese Mar Gregorios enthroned as Third Catholicos. Two other bishops - Kuriakose Mar Gregorios of Pampady, and Mar Theophilos of Bethany, consecrated by the Catholicos.

1930 Mar Ivanios of Bethany and Mar Theophilos joined the Roman Catholic Church, thus beginning the Syro-Malankara rite of the Roman Catholic Church.

1931 Syrian Patriarch Elias III comes to India, to make peace, not trusting any more the bona fides of his delegate Mar Julius. The British Viceroy of India, Lord Irwin (Halifax) had persuaded the Patriarch to make this visit. Mar Dionysius calls on him in Alwaye. The Patriarch declares openly that his excommunication has been withdrawn - a very wise move in the light of the court judgment that the excommunication was legally invalid. Negotiations for settlement of dispute between

authority of Patriarch and Catholicos fail to come to a settlement. Patriarch Elias III dies and is buried in Omallur – the only Syrian Patriarch to be buried in India.

1932 In the Middle East Mar Ignatius Ephrem is enthroned Patriarch. The Indian Catholicate refuses to recognize him as Patriarch since he was elected and enthroned without their participation.

1934 Mar Dionysius the Great passes away and is buried in the Old Seminary Chapel. Catholicos Geevarghese Mar Baselios sets out again for Homs in Syria, the new seat of the Syrian Patriarch. He is accompanied by the Patriarchal delegate Mar Julius. Negotiations prolonged for a month. The Syrians insist that the Catholicate is not valid. The delegation returns to India. In December 1934 the Malankara Association meets in the M.D. Seminary Kottayam and approves a new Constitution.

1935 The Patriarch's party convenes another meeting of the supporters at Karingachira (near Cochin) and tries to give the appearance of a Constitutional election of their Malankara Metropolitan.

1937 The Catholicos attends the Faith and Order Conference in Edinburgh.

1938 Mar Athanasius now files a new lawsuit claiming that he is the truly elected Malankara Metropolitan, and that all Church property including the Old Seminary should be handed over to him.

1943 The District Court of Kottayam gives judgement that the Catholicate of the East is validly established and that the decisions of the 1934 M.D. Seminary meeting are legally binding on the church. The Patriarch's party appeals to the High Court.

1947 The High Court judgment by a bench of 3 judges. Two judges favour Mar Athanasius, while the Chief Justice gives a minority judgment in favour of the Catholicos, who is also Malankara Metropolitan now. Review petition filed again in High Court. The year of Indian independence.

1951 The High Court rejects the Review Petition. The Catholicos appeals to the Supreme Court in the newly independent India.

1954 The Supreme Court asks the High Court to take up the matter for Review.

1956 The Kerala High Court reviews the case and gives judgement against the Catholicos. The Catholicos again appeals to the Supreme Court.

1958 Sept. 12 Full Bench of the Supreme Court gives unanimous judgment in favour of the Catholicos, confirming the old judgement of 1934 of the Kottayam District Court. It confirmed that Abdel-Messih was legitimate Patriarch, that the establishment of the Catholicate in 1912 was legitimate, that the ruling Catholicos is the legitimate Metropolitan of Malankara, and that the Patriarch of Antioch had no administrative jurisdiction in India. It declared invalid the Patriarch Party's Karingachira meeting and therefore Paulos Mar Athanasius who was elected there is not entitled to be Metropolitan of Malankara. The Patriarch's party now appeals to the Supreme Court in a review petition, which was rejected in October 28th, 1958. The Patriarch's party was also asked to pay the Catholicos all Court expenses - a substantial amount.

A series of quick negotiations between the two parties came to general agreement. Some leaders of the Patriarch's party recommended to the Syrian Patriarch that it would be wise now to recognise the Catholicos, and to come to some reconciling agreement.

December 16, 1958 In a special ceremony at the Old Seminary, the Patriarchal delegate Mar Julius formally hands over to the Catholicos a letter dated 9th December 1958 from the Patriarch acknowledging him as Catholicos of the East. The Catholicos hands over a letter dated 16-12-1958 to the delegate recognizing the Patriarch of Antioch subject to the constitution of the Indian church which limits the powers of the Patriarch to three things: (a) when a new Catholicos is to be enthroned in India, if there is a Patriarch in Antioch elected with the participation of the Indian Church, he should be invited, and if he comes, he will preside over the Synod of the Indian Church which enthrones the Catholicos.

(b) If there is a major investigation against the Catholicos and the Episcopal Synod has to take action on it, the Patriarch of Antioch can be invited to preside over that Synod, and if he comes, he will preside; if not the senior Metropolitan in India will preside (article 114)

(c) The Indian Church will recognize only a Patriarch enthroned with the cooperation of the Catholicos of the East (article 101).

December 26, 1958 The Catholicos convenes the Malankara Association at Puthencavu, and all the churches in Malabar, of both parties, about 2000 people, gladly participate in this representative assembly of the whole church. They elect new trustees. The bishops of both sides were present and given a thunderous reception. The former Patriarch's party is told that they do not have to pay the court expenses.

1964 Catholicos Baselius Geevarghese II dies. The enthronement of

Catholicos Baselius Augen in Kottayam. According to the agreement of the Constitution, the Patriarch is invited by the Synod here to preside at the enthronement. He comes and so presides. In his speeches he makes it clear that all authority in India is vested in the Catholicos; that the Patriarch of Antioch would not exercise any authority of jurisdiction in India. There is great rejoicing in the church and the Syrian Patriarch is universally lauded.

The Present Dispute Begins

1970 12 years after the Supreme Court judgement, when the decision of the court about the Patriarch's party paying the Catholicos's expenses can no longer be implemented, some undesirable elements begin to create troubles between the Patriarch and the Catholicos. The Patriarch was advised to attack the throne of St. Thomas, since this is the time-honoured symbol of the autonomy of the Indian Church. The Patriarch Ignatius Yaqub III writes several letters to the Catholicos, saying that the latter should not make himself equal to the Patriarch, that he should not use red ink for his letterhead, that he should not use the word Holiness and so on. The climax comes in the notorious letter No. 205 dated 27th June 1970. The Patriarch states his peculiar belief based on some Syrian tradition that St. Thomas was not a priest or a bishop, that he had no throne, and could not ordain priests or bishops. Despite several requests to withdraw this letter, the Patriarch continues his attack on St. Thomas and his Apostolic Throne.

1972 The Patriarch of Antioch consecrates one of his Syrian monks as Metropolitan and Apostolic Delegate to India, in January 1972, without so much as informing the Indian Church. On a visit to Beirut in December 1971 on other business, the present writer comes to know of the impending consecration in casual conversation and unofficially informs the church in India. The Malankara Episcopal Synod meets, with the participation of the present rival Catholicos (then Mar Philoxenos) and Mar Clemis, and sends an official cable to the Patriarch on January 1, 1972, requesting him not to ordain an Apostolic Delegate to India and not to send him to India. The Patriarch ignores the cable, ordains Timothy Timotheos as "Apostolic Delegate to India" and sends him to India with a letter dated 28th January 1972 addressed to the Catholicos, asking him to accept Timotheos as Patriarchal Delegate and to "heed" him. On 15 February 1972 the Synod considers this letter and unanimously resolves that neither the letter nor the delegate was acceptable to the Indian Church. The Patriarch was requested to recall the "delegate". He refused to do so.

Mar Timotheos now starts playing Apostolic Delegate and enters the Indian Churches without permission of the diocesan bishops, and prepares some people for a revolt against the Catholicate.

1973 The second notorious letter No. 245/13 dated 16-6-73 of the Syrian Patriarch goes directly to several Churches in India, and to many individuals, asking them to revolt against the Catholicos and the Episcopal Synod in India. The Syrian Bishop Timotheos gets sufficient copies of this letter printed in India and distributes them widely. The next most atrocious violation of all decent order comes when this Mar Timotheos begins to ordain priests and deacons, to replace the legitimately ordained priests in the parishes which refuse to cooperate with him. Unscrupulous and opportunist young people came forward to be ordained as priests, since they would not be qualified for priesthood through the legitimate channels.

The Managing Committee of the Indian Orthodox Church in their resolution dated 25-5-1973 asks the Syrian Patriarch to desist from interfering in the internal affairs of this Church, and asks him to recall his uncanonical delegate.

The Syrian Mar Timotheos now organizes a rival organisation called the Malankarar Jacobite Syrian Christian Association. The Patriarch gives his blessing to this unconstitutional body.

The Catholicos appeals to the Government of India against the illegal actions of a foreign bishop who was acting in violation of the verdict of the Supreme Court of India. The Government of India refuses to extend the residence permit and visa of Mar Timotheos. Before he leaves, he assembles his supporters and pledges that he will destroy the Church in India and will come back to take revenge for his "expulsion."

The Syrian Patriarch now calls an Indian monk the Very Revd Dr. K. P. Paul Remban, (who had a grievance against the Catholicos' party that he had not previously been made a bishop) to Damascus, and ordains him as Bishop Paulose Mar Athanasios. In a very insolent letter No. 323/73 dated 6-9-1973, the Patriarch writes to the Catholicos: "We order you that you give our beloved Metropolitan Paulose Mar Athanasius all necessary supports, helps and cooperation to strengthen the missionary activity of the Association" (i.e. the Evangelistic Association of the East, which the Patriarch was planning to use for his peculiar kind of 'missionary' activity in the Indian Church). This was both insulting and uncanonical, in at least three respects: According to the Indian Church's constitution (a) only those elected by the Malankara Association representing the people and approved by the Malankara Episcopal Synod can become

bishops; (b) such persons are to be consecrated by the Synod and the Catholicos here and not by anyone else; (c) the Patriarch has no power either to "order" the Catholicos or to authorise someone to carry out "missionary" activities here.

The church sent Fr. Paul Verghese, the Principal of the Seminary in Damascus to protest against this action. He conveyed this protest directly to the Patriarch in the presence of the newly consecrated bishop. The Patriarch stated that the new bishop had not been authorized to enter into our churches and therefore that his action was not uncanonical. The Patriarch was told that he had no canonical authority to call a monk from the Indian Church to Damascus or to ordain him Bishop. The Patriarch's reply was that he may do it again, if the Catholicos was not properly subservient to him.

1974 Early in 1974 the Patriarch called two other Indian priests - Fr. M. Thomas and Fr. Geevarghese, to go to the Middle East. Neither the Patriarch nor the opportunist priests consulted the legitimate authorities of the Indian Church. The two went clandestinely to Damascus, were secretly consecrated as bishops Thomas Mar Dionysius and Geevarghese Mar Gregorios. They arrived in India clandestinely in February 1974, secretly entered our churches without the permission of the diocesan bishops, began celebrating liturgy, inciting the people to revolt, and creating general pandemonium in the Church. They began ordaining other opportunist youngsters as priests - without proper educational qualification or Seminary training.

On February 20th, 1974, the Managing Committee of the Malankara Association passed the following resolution:

"This meeting records its strong protest and sorrow in His Holiness Mar Ignatius Yaqub III Patriarch of Antioch having ordained members of this Church as Metropolitans, in violation of the terms of acceptance made in 1958 and the Constitution of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, disregarding the resolution passed by this Managing Committee in its meeting held on 25-5-1973 and sent to His Holiness, and defying the regulations and practices of this Church, with a view to creating discord in this Church and entering unlawfully into its administration, and requesting the Malankara Episcopal Synod to take all the necessary steps in this matter".

The Break in Relations

The Malankara Episcopal Synod considered this resolution of the Managing Committee on March 8th 1974, and decided to forward it to the Patriarch. But the Synod also took another very significant decision.

the same meeting:

"Since the Synod in considering the said resolution, is inclined to think *prima facie* that the Patriarch has resiled from the terms of acceptance in 1958, it is decided that, before the Synod makes the final decision regarding the resolution of the Managing Committee, the Patriarch be requested to inform the Synod within a month whether he has so resiled".

Thus the Patriarch was given an opportunity to state that he had not resiled from the agreement of 1958. He was given a month's time to do so. He did not reply. The Indian Church waited patiently for three more months, and in the absence of a response from the Patriarch, made the declaration that the Syrian Patriarch had resiled from the agreement of 1958, and therefore the Indian Church's recognition of him as Patriarch which was based on that agreement was null and void. The declaration of the Synod meeting of August 3rd 1974 concluded as follows:

"On a careful and detailed consideration of all the above matters, this Synod is now convinced and declares that the present Patriarch His Holiness Yakub III, disregarding the specific conditions under which he was accepted in 1958, has resiled from the same and disentitled himself to and lost all the prerogatives and privileges provided in the Constitution of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church subject to which he was accepted".

The Secretary to the Episcopal Synod forwarded the text of the declaration to the Patriarch, and from that time till now there is no Patriarch recognised by the Indian Church.

The Excommunication

Meanwhile the Patriarch begins a series of new actions against the Catholicos and the Synod. On 30th January 1974 the Patriarch issued a list of 13 charges against the Catholicos, and asked the latter to submit an explanation. This was also a violation of the Constitution, according to which the legitimate authority for hearing complaints against the Catholicos is the Malankara Episcopal Synod (articles 106, 118, 119).

The Catholicos on receipt of the charges, submitted them to the Malankara Episcopal Synod, along with his comments on the charges. A copy of this submission to the Synod was sent to the Patriarch on 5th March 1974.

The Synod, in an emergency session on March 8, 1974, considered these documents. Since some of the charges of the Patriarch were quite vague (like that heresy was being taught in the sunday schools), the Synod

asked the Patriarch to make his charges more specific and provide references (e.g. which heresy, which Sunday school text book, etc.)

The Patriarch replied on 15th July 1974, without providing references, but making additional vague charges that heresy was being taught in the Theological Seminary also, without specifying what or whom.

The Synod asked three priests who were experts, Fr. Abraham Kallistos (Canon Law), Fr. K. C. Thomas (Church History) and Fr. Paul Vergès (Theology), to submit detailed reports on the issues involved in the Patriarch's charges. Their reports were considered by the Synod. Further clarifications were requested on certain points and supplementary reports were submitted.

The Synod also decided that neither the complainant nor the accused should chair the meeting of the Synod which would make the final decision on the charges. Accordingly it was decided that there was no need to invite the Patriarch to preside, since a complainant cannot preside at the meeting to consider his complaint.

The Synod met on August 3rd 1974 for the final decision. The documents had been thoroughly studied by the members of the Synod and came to a completely unanimous decision that all the charges made by the Patriarch were without substance or basis. The Catholicos was completely exonerated. The decision was communicated to the Patriarch.

It was the same meeting on Aug. 3rd 1974 that declared that Ignatios Yaquob III had by his own actions lost the privileges given to him by the agreement of 1958.

The Patriarch's response was to "suspend" the Catholicos. It is better to reproduce the Patriarch's order and the Catholicos' reply verbatim.

Letter No 15/75 dated 10-1-1975 from the Patriarch to the Catholicos

"We, the Patriarch of Antioch and all the East, therefore in our capacity as Supreme Spiritual and Ecclesiastical Head of the Universal Syrian Orthodox Church hereby suspend and restrain you, the Catholicos, from exercising any or all of the spiritual and ecclesiastical powers pertaining to the office of the Catholicos from the date of receipt of this order. You remain suspended until further orders".

Reply letter No 11/75 dated 24-1-1975 from the Catholicos to the Patriarch.

Your Holiness

We have received your letter No. 15 75 dated 10-1-1975.

The Constitution of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, which determines the relationship of this Church with the Patriarchate, does not grant your Holiness any authority to take any action or issue any order against us as envisaged in your Holiness's letter. Complaints Your Holiness raised against us are being considered by the Holy Episcopal Synod of Malankara, the only competent authority to deal with such matters, as Your Holiness has been already informed.

Further, after the decision of the Holy Episcopal Synod of the 3rd August 1974, that Your Holiness has disentitled yourself to and lost even all the prerogatives and privileges provided in the Constitution of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, communicated by the Secretary of the Synod on 5th of August 1974, we are bound to reject the letter forthwith, and do so hereby.

Under the circumstances, we have to inform Your Holiness most courteously that no notice can be taken of Your letter No. 15 75 dated 10-1-1975.

Yours in the Lord.

Sd/-

Catholicos of the East
and Malankara Metropolitan.

Please read Sections **More recent developments** and **A New Patriarch in Syria** (pp. 43-52) here.

APPENDIX I

MALANKARA ORTHODOX SYRIAN CHURCH THE CATHOLICATE OF THE EAST

Directory

| | |
|--|--|
| Founder and Patron Saint | : St. Thomas, One of the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ. |
| Canonized Saint | : St. Gregorios of Parumala |
| The Supreme Catholicos and Malankara Metropolitan | : His Holiness Baselius Mar Thoma Mathews I. |
| Head quarters | : Catholicate Aramana, Devalokam, Kottayam, Kerala State, India. Pin code: 686 038. Phone: 8499, 8500. Telegram: Devalokam |
| The Vaideeka (Clergy) Trustee | : Very Rev. Fr. T. S. Abraham Corepiscopo, Thengumthottathil, Ayroor, Tiruvalla |
| The Lay Trustee | : Sri P. C. Abraham, Padinjarekara, Kottayam |
| The Malankara Syrian Christian Association Secretary | : Sri E. J. Joseph Erikattu, Kottayam. |
| The Malankara Malpan | : Rev. Fr. Abraham Konattu, Pampakudi, Muvattupuzha. |

The Church At a Glance

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Total Membership | : 160,00,00 |
| 2. Dioceses | : 16 |
| 3. Parishes | : 1136 |
| 4. Chapels and Worship Centres | : 138 |
| 5. Members of the Episcopal Synod | : 15 |
| 6. Priests | : 1050 |
| 7. Deacons | : 65 |
| 8. Spiritual Organizations | : 7 |
| 9. Periodical Publications | : 4 |
| 10. Theological Seminary | : 1 |
| 11. Mission Training Centre | : 1 |
| 12. Asrams (Monasteries) | : 12 |
| 13. Convents (Women) | : 10 |
| 14. University Colleges | : 13 |
| 15. Industrial Training Centres | : 11 |
| 16. Schools | : 166 |
| 17. Orphanages | : 8 |
| 18. Hospitals | : 19 |
| 19. Monks | : 148 |
| 20. Nuns | : 146 |

THE HOLY EPISCOPAL SYNOD

1. **HIS HOLINESS MORAN MAR BASELIUS MAR THOMA MATHEWS I**
Catholicos of the East & Malankara Metropolitan (President of the Holy Episcopal Synod), Catholicate Palace, Devalokam, Kottayam - 686038, Kerala State, India. Phone: 8499, 8500. Telegram: Devalokam.
2. **HIS GRACE DANIEL MAR PHILOXENOS**
Metropolitan of Thumpamon (Secretary to the Holy Episcopal Synod), Basil Diara, Pathanamthitta, Kerala Tel. 243 (Pathanamthitta)
3. **HIS GRACE MATHEWS MAR COORIOS**
Metropolitan of Quilon & Catholicos - Designate, Bishop's House, Cross Jn., Quilon - 691001 Tel. 2030 (Quilon)
4. **HIS GRACE DR. PHILIPPOS MAR THEOPHILUS**
Metropolitan of Bombay & Ankarnali. Post Box No. 61, Thrikunnathu Seminary, Alwaye - 683101 Tel. 4339 (Alwaye) & 526901 (Bombay) (OR C/2 Bright Haven, Sion Trombay Road, Chembur, Bombay - 400071)
5. **HIS GRACE YUHANON MAR SEVERIOS**
Metropolitan of Cochin Zion Seminary, Koratty, Chalakudy, Kerala. Tel. 23 (Koratty)
6. **HIS GRACE THOMAS MAR TIMOTHEOS**
Metropolitan of Malabar, Mount Harmon Aramana, R.E.C. P.O., Calicut, Kerala. Tel. 78 (Kunnamangalam)
7. **HIS GRACE GEEVARGHESE MAR OSTHATHEOS**
Metropolitan of Niranam, Parumala Seminary, Mannar - 689626 Tel. 226 (Mannar) & 2357 (Thiruvalla)
8. **HIS GRACE DR. PAULOS MAR GREGORIOS**
Metropolitan of Delhi & the North. Post Box No. 98, Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kottayam - 686001. Tel. 3526 (Kottayam) & 666030 (Delhi)
9. **HIS GRACE STEPHANOS MAR THEODOSIUS**
Metropolitan of Calcutta, Post Box No. 24, St. Thomas Asram, Bhilai (M.P.) Tel. 5686 (Mursipara)
10. **HIS GRACE THOMAS MAR MAKARIOS**
Metropolitan of the Americas, Episcopal Diocesan House, 1114 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, N.Y. 14209, Tel: (415) 548-2202
11. **HIS GRACE JOSEPH MAR PACHOMIOS**
Metropolitan of Kandanad, St. Thomas Diara, Vettickal, Mulanthuruthy, Kerala. Tel. 120 (Mulanthuruthy)
12. **HIS GRACE YAQUOOB MAR POLYCARPOS**
Assistant Metropolitan of Cochin, Zion Seminary, Koratty, Chalakudy, Kerala. Tel. 23 (Koratty)
13. **HIS GRACE ZACHARIAH MAR DIONYSIUS**
Metropolitan of Madras, J 21, Anna Nagar, Madras - 600102, Tel. 615515 (Madras)
14. **HIS GRACE MATHEWS MAR BARNABAS**
Metropolitan of Idukki & Assistant Metropolitan of Kottayam, Mar Kuriakose Diara, Pampady. Tel. 31. Kerala.

15. HIS GRACE GEEVARGHESE MAR DIOSCOROS

Metropolitan of Trivandrum. House No. 24, Tagore Gardens, Meenakshi College P.O., Trivandrum - 695011. Tel. 62691 (Trivandrum)

(N.B. The Diocese of Kottayam is temporarily without a bishop and the Malankara Metropolitan is in charge. The Diocese of Kottayam Central is directly administered by the Malankara Metropolitan-cum-Catholicos.)

THE DIOCESES AT A GLANCE

1. ANKAMALI

Parishes: 95, Chapels: 10, Catholicate Centres: 9, Priests: 158, People: 158,000, Colleges: 2, Secondary Schools: 12, U.P. Schools 12, L.P. Schools 4, Hospitals: 3, Convent: 1, Orphanage: 1

2. THE AMERICAS

Parishes: 20, Worship Centres: 9, Priests: 27, Deacons: 5,

3. BOMBAY

Parishes: 19, Chapels: 9, Priests: 24, People: 40,000, Schools: 3

4. COCHIN

Parishes: 76, Chapels: 19, Congregation: 1, Priests: 63, People: 108,400, College: 1, Secondary Schools: 8, U.P. Schools: 3, L.P. Schools: 1, I.T.C.: 2, Hospitals: 2, Monasteries: 2, Convents: 2

5. CALCUTTA

Parishes: 23, Congregations: 31, Priests: 19, People: 40,000, Schools: 1, Monastery: 1, Convent: 1, Hospital: 1, Orphanage: 1

6. DELHI

Office: St. Mary's Orthodox Cathedral, C III Safdarjung Development Area, Hauz-Khaz, New Delhi - 110016, Parishes: 36, Congregations: 9, Priests: 15, People: 45000, Schools: 6

7. IDUKKI

Parishes: 28, Priests: 16, People: 40000, Chapels: 3

8. KOTTAYAM

Parishes: 88, Chapels: 6, Priests: 68, Colleges: 2, People: 120000, I.T.C.: 2, Secondary Schools: 7, U.P. Schools: 4, L.P. Schools: 1, Hospitals: 4, Monastery: 1, Orphanage: 1

9. KOTTAYAM CENTRAL

Parishes: 9, Priests: 9

10. KANDANAD

Parishes: 86, Chapels: 11, Catholicate Centres: 6, Priests: 95, People: 145,000, College: 1, I.T.C.: 1, Secondary Schools: 6, U.P. Schools: 6, L.P. Schools: 1, Hospital 1, Orphanage: 1

11. MALABAR

Parishes: 132, Priests: 74, People: 180000, College: 1, Secondary Schools: 2, U.P. Schools: 4, L.P. Schools: 5, Hospitals: 2, Monastery: 1, Convent: 1, Orphanages: 2

12. MADRAS

Parishes: 32, Congregations: 9, People: 50000, Priests: 32, Secondary Schools: 2, L.P. Schools: 5

13. NIRANAM

Parishes: 107, Chapels: 5, Priests: 98, People: 155000, I.T.C.: 1, Secondary Schools: 7, U.P. Schools: 5, L.P. Schools: 22, Hospitals: 2, Monasteries: 4

14. QUILON

Parishes: 129, Chapels: 7, Priests: 79, People: 70000, Colleges: 4, Secondary Schools: 9, U.P. Schools: 6, L.P. Schools: 8, Hospital: 1, Monasteries: 3, Convents: 4, Orphanages: 1

15. THUMPAMON

Parishes: 139, Chapels: 6, Priests: 119, People: 165000, College: 1, I.T.C.: 1, Secondary Schools: 5, U.P. Schools: 6, L.P. Schools: 8, Hospitals: 3, Monasteries: 2, Convents: 1

16. TRIVANDRUM

Parishes: 96, Chapels: 3, Priests: 54, People: 65000, Monastery: 1, Convent: 1, Orphanages: 1

Spiritual Organizations

1. The Orthodox Syrian Sunday School Association of the East: Sunday Schools: 750, District Inspectors: 80, Diocesan Directors: 16, Central Office: Devalokam.
2. Mar Gregorios Orthodox Christian Student Movement of India: Units: 135, Members: 40,000, Wings: 8, Student Centres: 2, Book Shop and Publishing House: 1, Central Office: MGOCSM Centre, Kottayam - 686001.
3. The Orthodox Christian Youth Movement of the East. Units: 800, Central Office: St. Paul's M.T.C. Mavelikara - 630103.
4. The Martha Mariam Vanitha Samajam (Organization of Women), Units: 900, Central Office: Ebenezer Diara, Manganam, Kottayam - 686004.
5. The Servants of the Cross, Full-time workers: 12, Helpers: 112, Centres: 100, Total Converts: 22,500, Central Office: Carmel Diara, Kandanad P.O.
6. St. Thomas Orthodox Vaidika Sangham (Clergy Association of the Church).
7. Malankara Orthodox Bala Samajam & Balika Samajam.

Periodical Publications

1. Malankara Sabha
2. Orthodox Youth
3. The Malankara Orthodox Herald.

ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Founded in 1815 by the late Bishop Joseph Mar Dionysius II, this oldest of ne Catholic Seminaries in India has since 1964 been affiliated to Serampore University, and offers a Graduate in Sacred Theology (G.S.T.), Bachelor of Divinity and Master of Theology courses.

Students: 100 including 4 Post-graduate students.

Teaching Staff

H.G. Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios Metropolitan (Principal)
 H.G. Geevarghese Mar Osthathios Metropolitan (Vice-Principal)
 Rev. Fr. K. M. Alexander (Deputy Vice-Principal and Bursar)
 Rev. Dr. V. C. Samuel (Dean of Studies)
 Rev. Fr. T. J. Joshua
 Rev. Fr. N. K. Korathu Malpan
 Very Rev. Fr. Geevarghese Ramban (Warden)
 Rev. Fr. Philipose Thomas
 Rev. Fr. Dr. K. M. George (Registrar)
 Rev. Dn. Dr. K. A. George
 Rev. Fr. M. Jacob Kurian
 Rev. Dn. O. Thomas
 Rev. Fr. K. L. Mathew Vaidyan

Administrative Staff

Rev. Fr. T. V. Varghese (Manager)
 Rev. Fr. K. V. Samuel (Secretary for Promotion of Finance)
 Rev. Fr. C. C. Cherian (Librarian)
 Rev. Dn. M. P. George (Assistant Librarian)
 Rev. Fr. T. P. Elias (Programme Secretary, Sophia Centre)
 P. T. George (Office Manager)
 Philip Abraham (Typist)

The M.G.D. Archives is situated at the Seminary and has ancient records, documents and materials regarding the life of the Church.

Sophia Centre: A special wing of the Seminary situated on the same campus is a quiet place for Conferences, Retreats, Study Programmes, Training of Lay people, etc.

Deepthi: This is the annual publication of the Seminary with articles by staff and students.

The Star of the East: An ecumenical publication dealing mainly with the Oriental and Eastern Orthodox Churches, is published by the Sophia Centre.

Monasteries and Mission Centres

1. Bethany Asram, Ranni-Perunad (Society of the Order of the Imitation of Christ), Inmates 20. Branches at Kunnamkulam and Kuzhimattom.

2. Mount Tabor Diara, Pathanapuram (Society of the Order of The Sacred Transfiguration), Inmates 51 including 26 Priests.
3. Bethlehem Asram, Chengamanad, Inmates 24 including 13 Priests.
4. St. George Diara, Othara, Inmates 11.
5. Christa Sishya Asram, Thadagam, Coimbatore, Inmates 12.
6. St. Paul's Asram, Puthupadi, Calicut-6. Inmates 14.
7. St. Paul's Mission Training Centre, Mavelikara. (At Present 25 students are undergoing 3 years training in Missionary work. There is a printing press and a book stall attached to it.)
8. Holy Trinity Asram, Angadi P.O., Ranni, Kerala. Inmates 6.
9. Mount Carmel Asram, East Kollada, Quilon, Kerala. Inmates 6.
10. Mount Calvary Asram, Pattazhi, Kottarakara, Kerala. Inmates: 3.
11. St. George Mount Asram, Chayalode, Adoor. Inmates: 3.
12. St. Thomas Asram, Sooranad. Inmates: 2.

Also there are mission centres at Bhilai, Palavila, Haripad, and Ayur.

Convents

1. Bethany Convent, Ranni-Perunad. (Sisterhood of the Imitation of Christ). Inmates 26, Branches Kunnamkulam & Kottayam.
2. Mount Tabor Convent, Pathanapuram. Inmates 50.
3. Nazareth Convent, Kadampanadu. Inmates: 19.
4. St. Mary's Convent, Othara. Inmates: 13.
5. Bethalel Convent, Sooranad. Inmates: 26.
6. St. Mary Magdalene Convent, Aduputti, Kunnamkulam. Inmates: 40.
7. St. Paul's Convent, Mount Pisga, Puthupadi. Inmates: 9.
8. Bethlehem St. Mary's Convent, Kizhakkambalam. Inmates: 17.
9. St. Mary's Convent, Adoor. Inmates 8.
10. Holy Cross Convent, Kumarapuram, Trivandrum. Inmates: 2.

HOSPITALS

1. Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church Medical Mission Hospital, Kolencherry. Honorary Director: Dr. K. C. Mammen FRCP (E) DCH (London) Beds: 420, Nurses: 109, Doctors: 41, Office Staff: 228.
A Community Health Programme, A Rehabilitation of the Blind Programme and a School of Nursing are run by the institution.
2. Mar Geevarghese Dionysius Memorial Hospital, Kangazha. Director Dr. S. Joseph M.D., Beds: 400, Doctors: 40, Nurses: 90, Office Staff: 190.
A school Health Programme, A Mobile underfives clinic, a Nursing School and a Laboratory Technology training school are also run by the hospital.
3. St. Gregorios Mission Hospital, Parumala. Beds: 150, Doctors: 10, Nurses: 35, Office Staff: 40.
4. St. Mary's Hospital, Eraviperor. Beds: 25, Doctors: 4, Nurses: 6, Office Staff: 4.

5. Mar Theodosius Medical Mission Hospital, Sasthamcotta. Beds: 80, Doctors: 4, Nurses: 10, Staff: 8.
6. Mar Theodosius Memorial Hospital, Ranny-Perunad. Beds: 35, Doctors: 3, Nurses: 8.
7. M.G.M. Abhaya Bhavan Dispensary, Pampady. Beds: 12, Doctors: 2, Staff: 3.
8. Cheriapally Hospital, Kottayam. Beds: 50, Doctors: 3, Nurses: 16, Office Staff: 13.
9. St. Ignatius Hospital, Kaipattoor. Beds: 60, Nurses: 8, Doctors: 3, Office Staff: 12.
10. St. Andrew's Hospital, Puthencavu, Chengannur. Beds: 100, Doctors: 5, Nurses: 25, Office Staff: 20.
11. St. George Hospital, Puthuppady, Calicut - 6. Beds: 15, Doctor: 1, Nurses: 5, Office Staff: 9.
12. St. Mary's Hospital, Pothanicad. Beds: 20, Doctor: 1, Nurses: 4, Staff: 5.
13. St. Mary's Hospital Manarcad. Beds: 180, Doctors: 12, Nurses: 45, Staff: 10.
14. Mar Baselius Medical Mission Hospital, Kothamangalam. Beds: 200, Doctors: 14, Nurses: 50, Staff: 40.
15. Bishop Walsh Memorial Medical Centre, Thadagom. Beds: 12, Doctors: 2, Nurses: 3, Staff: 4.
16. M.D.M.M. Hospital, Kariampady. Recently started.
17. St. John's Hospital, Ulanad. Recently started.
18. Malankara Orthodox Church Mission Hospital, Kunnamkulam. Recently started.

University Colleges - affiliated to Kerala and Calicut Universities

1. Catholicate College, Pathanamthitta (about 2800 students). Post Graduate Courses in Malayalam, Hindi, History, Physics, and Botany are offered in addition to Degree, Pre-Degree Courses in various groups and subjects. Hostels are run for men and women.
2. Baselius College, Kottayam. Students: 1800.
3. St. Mary's College, Sultan's Battery. Students: 1500.
4. St. Stephen's College, Pathanapuram. Students: 1255.
5. St. Gregorios College, Kottarakara. Students: 1374.
6. Mar Athanasius College, Kothamangalam. Students: 1931.
7. St. Peter's College, Kolencherry. Students: 2078.
8. St. Thomas College, Ranni. Students: 1603.
9. Mar Athanasius College of Engineering, Kothamangalam. Students: 540.
10. Mount Tabor Training College, Pathanapuram. Students: 270.
11. Bethany Home Science College, Kunnamkulam. Students: 215.
12. Kuriakose Gregorios College, Pampady. Students: 600.
13. St. Cyril's College, Adoor. Students: 710.

Industrial Training Centres

1. Mar Baselius I.T.C., Kallumala, Mavelikara.
2. Mar Philoxenos I.T.C., Chengamanad, Kottarakara.
3. Mar Philoxenos I.T.C. Mylapra, Pathanamthitta.
4. Mathews Mar Ivanios I.T.C. Pothenpuram, Pampady.
5. Mount Carmel I.T.C. East Kallada, Quilon.
6. St. Mary's I.T.C. Niranam, Tiruvalla.
7. St. Mary's I.T.C. Manarcad, Kottayam.
8. St. George I.T.C. Kadamattom, Kolencherry.
9. St. John's I.T.C. Pathichira, Mavelikara.
10. Mar Gregorios I.T.C. Thalacode, Mulanthuruthy.
11. St. Mary's I.T.C. Kunnamkulam, Trichur.

Teacher Training Schools

1. Rajarshi Memorial Training School, Vadavucode.
2. St. John's Training School, Koothattukulam.
3. St. Peter's Training School, Chowalloor.
3. St. Peter's Training School, Kolencherry.
4. St. George Training School, Chowalloor.
5. M.S.S. Training School, Thazhakara, Mavelikara.

Secondary Schools

1. M.D. Seminary High School, Kottayam. Students: 1831.
2. M.G.M. High School, Tiruvalla. Students: 1642.
3. M.G.D. High School, Puthussery. Students: 1685.
4. M.G.D. High School for Boys, Kundara. Students: 1168.
5. M.G.D. High School for Girls, Kundara. Students: 1138.
6. St. Thomas High School, Karthikappally. Students: 1939.
7. Catholicate High School, Pathanamthitta. Students: 939.
8. M.G. High School, Thumpamon. Students: 680.
9. Metropolitan High School, Puthencavu. Students: 767.
10. M.S.S. High School, Thazhakara. Students: 963.
11. St. Paul's High School, Vazhoor. Students: 965.
12. St. Behanan's High School, Vennikulam. Students: 1074.
13. N.A. High School, Puthupady, Calicut.
14. St. Stephen's High School for Boys, Pathanapuram.
15. Mount Tabor High School for Girls, Pathanapuram.
16. Ponnaiah Higher Secondary School, Tiruchirappally.
17. Orphanage High School, Korom.
18. St. George High School, Chowalloor.
19. St. George High School Chayalode.

20. Mar Athanasius High School, Nedumbassery.
21. St. Mary's High School, Pothanicadu.
22. St. Mary's High School, Kuruppumpady.
23. Fr. Joseph Memorial High School, Kothamangalam.
24. M.K.M. High School, Vengoor.
25. St. Mary's High School, Morakala, Pallikara.
26. Salem High School, Vengola.
27. St. Stephen's High School for Boys, Chelad.
28. St. Stephen's High School for Girls, Chelad.
29. St. John's High School, Kavalangad.
30. Mar Athanasius College High School, Kothamangalam.
31. Mar Basil High School, Kothamangalam.
32. M.G.M. High School, Puthencruz.
33. St. George High School, Arakunnam.
34. High School, Irumpanam, Cochin.
35. St. Ignatius High School, Kanjiramattam.
36. Mar Augen Memorial High School, Kodanad.
37. Mr. George High School, Vennikulam.
38. Rajarshi Memorial High School, Vadavucode.
39. St. John's High School, Kanniattunirappu.
40. St. John's English Medium High School, Kunnamkulam.
41. St. Mary's High School, Thalackode, Mulanthuruthy.
42. M.J.D. High School, Kunnamkulam.
43. M.K.M. High School, Piravom.
44. St. Mary's High School, Kandanad.
45. St. John's High School, Koothattukulam.
46. Mar Timotheos Memorial High School, Pampakuda.
47. Mar Stephen High School, Valakom.
48. St. Peter's High School, Kolenchery.
49. M.G.M. High School, Pampady.
50. St. Thomas High School, South Pampady.
51. St. Mary's High School, Manarcadu.
52. Amayannoor High School, Amayannoor.
53. St. Thomas High School, Thazhathangady.
54. St. Thomas High School, Thottakad.
55. Jerusalem Mount High School, Vakathanam.
56. Balikamadam High School, Tirumoolapuram.
57. St. Mary's High School, Niranom.
58. St. Thomas High School, Kizhakkumbhagam, Niranom.

59. St. Mary's High School, Valiakunnam, Theodical P.O.
60. Dr. C. T. Eapen Memorial Residential High School, Sasthamcotta.
61. St. John's High School, Pathichira.
62. St. Thomas High School, Kadampanad.
63. St. Mary's High School, Adoor.
64. St. Mary Magdalene Girls High School, Kurichy.
65. Mar Severius High School, Ranni.
66. St. Thomas High School, Ranni.
67. St. George High School, Attachakal, Konni.
68. St. George Mount High School, Kaipattoor.
69. St. Joseph High School, Naranammoozhy.
70. St. Mary's Girl's High School, Pathanamthitta.
71. Mar Philoxenos Memorial High School, Chungathara.
72. St. Thomas Higher Secondary School, Coimbatore.
73. St. Thomas English School, Madras.
74. St. Thomas English School, Puzhathivakkam, Madras.
75. St. Mary's Higher Secondary School, Perambur.
76. M.G.M. Senior Secondary School, Bhilai.
77. St. Paul's School, New-Delhi - 16.
78. Basil Higher Secondary School, Baroda.

U.P. Schools and L.P. Schools

There are 88 U.P. and L.P. Schools run by the Church.

Orphanages

1. St. Mary's Boys' Home, Thalacode Mulanthuruthy. Inmates: 138.
2. St. Paul's Children's Home, Puthupady, Calicut. Inmates: 62.
3. St. Thomas Children's Home, Bhilai. Inmates: 48.
4. St. Thomas Children's Home, Thiruvithamcodu. Inmates: 50.
5. Mar Baselius Children's Home, Mannapra, Palghat. Inmates: 55.
6. Children's Home, Valayanchirangara. Inmates: 16.
7. M.G.D. Ashram and Bala Bhavan, Karunagiri. Inmates: 14.

Destitute Old People's Homes

1. M.G.M. Abhaya Bhavan, Pothanpuram; Pampady. Inmates: 39.
2. Carmel Mandiram, Mulanthuruthy. Under Construction.

APPENDIX II

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE MALANKARA ORTHODOX SYRIAN CHURCH

1. DECLARATION.

1. The Malankara Church is an autocephalous division of the Orthodox Syrian Church. The Primate of the Orthodox Syrian Church is the Patriarch of Antioch.
2. The Malankara Church was founded by St. Thomas the Apostle and is included in the Orthodox Syrian Church of the East and the Primate of the Orthodox Syrian Church of the East is the Catholicos.
3. The ancient and the real name of the Malankara Church is the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church although it is also wrongly called 'The Jacobite Church', for the same reasons for which the Orthodox Syrian Church has been also called so.
4. All men and women, who have received Holy Baptism and believe in the divinity of the Holy Trinity, the incarnation of the Son, the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father the Holy Church and the application of the Nicene Creed there-in-all, the divine inspiration of Holy Traditions, the intercession of the Mother of God and the saints, the commemoration of the departed ones, the administration of the seven sacraments, and the canonical observances like fasting etc. and have accepted the obligation to observe them, will be members of this Church.
5. The approved Canon of this Church is the Hudaya Canon written by the Hebrews (the same canon book as the one printed in Paris in the year 1672).

2. THE PARISH CHURCH

A. The Parish Assembly

6. Every Parish Church shall have a Parish Assembly.
7. All adult males who confess and receive Holy Qurbana at least once a year and who have completed the age of twenty-one years, may be the members of the Parish Assembly.
8. There shall be a Parish Assembly Register containing the names and particulars of the members of the Parish Assembly, and a Holy Confession Register containing the names and particulars of those who have confessed and received absolution.
9. A member of one Parish Church can either become a permanent member of another Parish Church or if he resides temporarily in another place for his profession or other-wise become a temporary member of the Parish Church there, with the permission of the Vicar of the Parish Church he leaves. The Vicar of the Parish Church he joins and the respective Vicars shall report to the respective Diocesan Metropolitans about such leaving and joining.

the event of the Vicar refusing permission for such transfer the Diocesan Metropolitan may be petitioned and all concerned shall abide by his decision. Those who have joined a Parish temporarily will not have, as long as they continue so, the right to participate in the Parish Assembly of the Parish Church in which they are permanent members or exercise their vote there.

10. If a member of a Parish Assembly fails to pay for a period of six months any amount on any account due from him to the Parish or to the Church, that member will not have the right to take part or exercise his vote in any Parish Assembly. If he continues in arrears, without paying such amounts for one year his name shall be removed from the Parish Assembly Register. A member so removed from the Parish Assembly Register will forfeit the right to be a member either of his own or any other Parish Assembly, until he has paid up all his arrears. The Vicar of the Parish shall write to the Metropolitan of the Diocese as to what shall be done thereafter with that member, and deal with him according to the written order of the Metropolitan.
11. A member who has been removed as above, as also a member who shall newly join a Parish, will not have the right to exercise his vote in the Parish Assembly before the expiry of three months after the former has paid up his arrears and the latter joined the Parish.
12. The Vicar shall convene the Parish Assembly Meeting by announcing in the Parish Church during service on two Sundays before the meeting, either by himself or as directed by him by the priest who conducts the service, about the meeting and the agenda thereof, and the meeting may be conducted either on the second Sunday of the announcement itself or any other day following. The Vicar or on his direction, the Secretary shall publish on the first Sunday of the announcement by posting on the notice board or otherwise, a list of those who have the right to take part and vote in the Parish Assembly Meeting. If needed, the Parish Assembly may be held after giving one week's notice in writing to all the members of the Parish Assembly, by the Vicar or the Secretary under the direction of the Vicar. If there be other churches or chapels under the auspices of the Parish Church, such churches or chapels shall be informed of the meeting in such manner as may be prescribed by the Parish Assembly. With the sanction of the Diocesan Metropolitan, the Parish may be divided into wards and members of the Parish Assembly from respective wards may elect one or more of them to represent them at the Parish Assembly Meeting, and any decision taken in the meeting of such representatives shall be deemed to be the decision of the Parish Assembly.

There shall be no quorum for the Parish Assembly Meeting.

13. The Parish Assembly shall meet at least twice a year: The Vicar shall convene the Parish Assembly Meeting when he deems it necessary or at the request of the Managing Committee or at that of twenty percent of the Parish Assembly Members. The Diocesan Metropolitan, if he finds it necessary, may after announcing in the Church himself or causing such an announcement to be made, convene the Parish Assembly Meeting on any subsequent day, and the Diocesan Metropolitan shall preside over the

meeting so convened.

14. If the Vicar does not convene a meeting of the Parish Assembly at the request of any party entitled to make such a request, the Diocesan Metropolitan may be petitioned and the decision of the Diocesan Metropolitan shall be implemented.
15. The Vicar shall be the President and other Parish Priests if there are any shall be the Vice-Presidents of the Parish Assembly. The Vicar shall preside over the Parish Assembly Meeting except when it shall be convened by the Diocesan Metropolitan, as stated in section 13 above or by the Malankara Metropolitan as stated in section 98.† If for any reason the Vicar is unable to preside, one of the Vice-Presidents present, and if there be no Vice-President present, any member of the Parish Assembly, may on the direction and in the writing of the Vicar, preside over the Parish Assembly Meeting.
16. There shall be a Secretary for the Parish Assembly, who shall be elected at the Parish Assembly Meeting, and he shall record and maintain the minutes of the Parish Assembly Meeting. Without assigning any reason, the Parish Assembly may with the approval of the Diocesan Metropolitan remove the secretary from office. When the Diocesan Metropolitan shall come to the church on his Parish visit the minutes shall be got signed by him.
17. The duties of the Parish Assembly shall include the election of the "Kaikaran" (lay steward), the Secretary and the members of the Management Committee; the removal of them if necessary with the approval of the Diocesan Metropolitan; the passing of the budget for the year; the appointment of auditor or auditors and the consideration of their report; the adoption of the yearly account and the consideration and decision of the matters required for the Parish.
18. The Vicar shall send or cause to be sent by the Secretary the decisions of the Parish Assembly to the Diocesan Metropolitan whenever such are made.
19. The Diocesan Metropolitan may be appealed to against any decision of the Parish Assembly and the Vicar shall simultaneously be informed in writing of such appeal. If the Diocesan Metropolitan agrees with the decision of the Parish Assembly, he shall dismiss the appeal, but if he disagrees, he shall within three months after the receipt of the appeal, place the same before the Diocesan Council and he shall in consultation with the Council decide the appeal matter.
20. Until a decision is made on the appeal, the Diocesan Metropolitan may in his discretion stay the implementation of the decision of the Parish Assembly by sending stay kalpana (order). The decision of the Parish Assembly, shall come into effect, if the aggrieved party fails to inform the Vicar in writing about the appeal within five days after the decision of the Parish Assembly or if no order of stay is received within two weeks of the decision of the Parish Assembly.
21. If the Diocesan Metropolitan is satisfied that the decision of the Parish Assembly is not right or that it is beyond the limits of the powers of the Parish Assembly, he shall have authority, even if no appeal has been made.

† Section 98. The Malankara Metropolitan may officially visit all the Parishes of the Malankara Church and if found necessary, he may convene the Parish Assembly and the Diocesan Assembly after informing the Diocesan Metropolitan.

to adopt the procedures stated in sections 19 and 20 above with regard to such decision and settle the matter.

22. After setting apart the portion referred to in Section ‡ 122 here-under, the balance shall be spent on the following items, in the following order of priority and only any balance remaining over may be spent for other needs of the Parish and the Church in general:-
- (a) Day-to-day expenses in connection with Holy Qurbana, festivals and other ministrations of the Church.
 - (b) Expenses in connection with the maintenance and upkeep of the Parish Church and other Parish buildings.
 - (c) Salary of the Vicar, the other Priests, the Sexton etc.
 - (d) Payments due to the Church Centre and the Diocesan Centre.
 - (e) Expenses for the Schools, Charitable Hospitals, Orphanages, Sunday Schools, Prayer Meetings, Gospel work and the like conducted by the Parish Church.
23. The acquisition of any immovable property for the Parish Church or the sale or creation of any charge on any immovable property of the Parish Church, shall be in pursuance of the decision thereto made by the Parish Assembly and the written consent of the Diocesan Metropolitan and shall be done by the Vicar and the Kaikaran jointly.

B. Parish Managing Committee

24. For every Parish Assembly there shall be a Parish Managing Committee.
25. The members of the Parish Managing Committee excluding the priests, shall be elected by the Parish Assembly and their term of office shall be one year. Every Parish Managing Committee shall have a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 15 members excluding the Priests. The Parish Assembly shall decide the needed number of members within these limits. If any Parish require more than 15 members for its Parish Managing Committee, the Parish Assembly may with the approval of the Diocesan Metropolitan elect the additional members required. If the Parish is divided into wards as provided in section 12 above, the Parish Assembly may elect the Parish Managing Committee members on such ward-basis. In the event of any vacancy arising in the Parish Managing Committee, the remaining members of the Committee may fill up such vacancy by co-option from the members of the Parish Assembly.

If in view of any circumstances special to any Parish, it is found necessary to extend the term of the Parish Managing Committee, the Parish Assembly may with the special permission of the Diocesan Metropolitan extend the term of office of that Parish Managing Committee to a period of three years.

26. The Vicar shall be the President of the Parish Managing Committee; other priests if any shall be the Vice-presidents. The Kaikaran and the Secretary for

‡ Section 122. Out of the annual gross income of a Church including its properties, 10% for the first Rs. 500/-; and 5% for the remaining Rs. 500/- to Rs. 1500/-; and 2½% for the amount above Rs. 1500/- shall be sent every year to the Malankara Metropolitan. If the percentage as stated above of any church is less than Rs. 10/-, not less than Rs. 10/- shall be sent from that Church to the Malankara Metropolitan under this item.

the current year and the outgoing kaikaran of the previous year shall members of the Parish Managing Committee.

27. The Vicar shall report to the Diocesan Metropolitan about the election of Kaikaran, the Secretary and the other members of the Parish Managing Committee within a week's time along with a copy of the Parish Assembly proceedings and his written approval obtained for the same. If no kalpa (order) of approval of the Diocesan Metropolitan is received within the weeks of forwarding the report, it shall be deemed that the Diocesan Metropolitan has approved such election.
28. The Vicar on his direction the Secretary shall convene the meeting of the Parish Managing Committee by giving written notice and the Vicar shall preside over the meeting. If for any reason the Vicar is unable to preside, one of the vice-presidents, if any, and if there be no Vice-president a member of the Parish Managing Committee, may on the direction in writing of the Vicar, preside over the meeting.
29. The Vicar shall convene the meeting of the Parish Managing Committee when he deems it necessary or when requested by the Kaikaran or at the request of one third of the members of the Parish Managing Committee on the direction of the Diocesan Metropolitan. The Parish Managing Committee shall meet not less than four times a year. If found necessary the Parish Assembly may decide a quorum for the Parish Managing Committee meeting.
30. The Secretary of the Parish Assembly shall also be the Secretary of the Parish Managing Committee. The Secretary shall record and keep the minutes of the Parish Managing Committee, and when the Diocesan Metropolitan comes to the church on his parish visit the minutes shall be got signed by him.
31. The duties of the Parish Managing Committee shall include the preparation of the yearly budget and the presentation of it to the Parish Assembly, the execution of the matters authorised by the Parish Assembly, the consideration and recommendation to the Parish Assembly of matters necessary for the Parish and the examination of the accounts presented by the Kaikaran.

C. Kaikaran (Lay-Steward)

32. Every Parish Church shall have a kaikaran who shall be the joint-steward along with the Vicar of all the assets of the Parish Church. When the Kaikaran goes out of office his stewardship will also terminate. The Parish Assembly may, if found necessary, elect not more than two kaikarans with joint responsibility. In all legal proceedings on behalf of the Parish Church it shall be sufficient if the lay-steward is made party. (If there be two kaikarans for a Parish Church, any reference to one kaikaran in this constitution shall be deemed to apply to both the kaikarans).
33. The Kaikaran shall be elected by the Parish Assembly and his term of office shall be one year.
34. The Parish Assembly may without assigning any reason remove the kaikaran from office with the approval of the Diocesan Metropolitan.

35. The duties of the Kaikaran shall include recording and maintaining correct accounts of the Parish; receiving the income and making the expenditure of the Parish according to the direction of the Parish Assembly and the Parish Managing Committee; preparing the half yearly accounts of the Parish every six months and presenting the same to the Parish Managing Committee; preparing the yearly accounts of the Parish at the year end and presenting the same to the Parish Managing Committee and thereafter presenting the same to the Parish Assembly. When the Diocesan Metropolitan comes to the Church on his Parish visit the account books of the Parish shall be got signed by him.
36. The Vicar shall send, or cause to be sent by the Secretary two copies of the summarised statement of accounts passed at the Parish Assembly to the Diocesan Metropolitan for his approval.
37. For every Parish there shall be a register of the movable and the immovable properties of the Parish Church and it shall be made up-to-date every year and signed by the Vicar and the kaikaran and kept in the custody of the kaikaran; and when the Diocesan Metropolitan comes to the Church on his Parish visit the same shall be got signed by him. All documents relating to the assets of the Parish and all records except those for the current year to be kept by the Secretary and the kaikaran or those to be kept by the Vicar shall be kept under the joint-responsibility of the Vicar and the kaikaran.

D. VICAR

38. There shall be a Vicar for every Parish Church; other priests, if any, shall be assistants to the Vicar.
39. The Vicar shall be joint-steward with the kaikaran of the assets of the Parish. The monies of the Parish shall be deposited in the joint names of the Vicar and the kaikaran or in the name of any one of them with the consent of each other. But the kaikaran may retain with him an amount as fixed by the Parish Managing Committee.
40. The Diocesan Metropolitan has authority to appoint remove or transfer the Vicar and other priests. When the Vicar is so removed or transferred his stewardship will also terminate.
41. If a priest belonging to one Diocese is to be transferred to another Diocese, such transfer shall be decided by the Metropolitans of the two Dioceses concerned in consultation with each other.
42. Deleted.
43. In addition to the Baptism Register, the Marriage Register, the Burial Register, the Parish Assembly Register and the Confession Register, there shall be a Parish Register containing the names and other particulars of all men and women of the Parish entered regularly under the responsibility of the Vicar and kept in his custody. When the Diocesan Metropolitan comes to the Church on his Parish visit these shall be got signed by him. The Vicar shall keep also the files of kalpanas (orders) and other documents received from the higher authorities of the Church.

44. The Vicar shall be the custodian of the movable articles required for the day to day use in Church Services and those not so used shall be in the custody of the Vicar and the Kaikaran.

3. DIOCESE

A. Diocesan Assembly.

45. Every Diocese shall have a Diocesan Assembly.
46. The Vicar or if inconvenient for him one of the Assistant Priests deputed by the Vicar and two laymen elected by every Parish Assembly in a Diocese shall be members of the Diocesan Assembly. Their term of office shall be three years.
47. Election of the Diocesan Secretary and the members of the Diocesan Council, appointment of auditor to examine the accounts of the income and expenditure of the Diocese, consideration of the auditor's report, adoption of the Annual Accounts and consideration and decision of matters necessary for the Diocese are within the functions of the Diocesan Assembly.
48. The Diocesan Metropolitan shall convene the Diocesan Assembly.
49. The Diocesan Metropolitan shall be the President of the Diocesan Assembly and shall preside over the Diocesan Assembly.
50. There shall be a Secretary for the Diocesan Assembly who shall be elected by the Diocesan Assembly and such election shall be valid if confirmed by the Diocesan Metropolitan. The Diocesan Assembly may with the approval of the Diocesan Metropolitan remove the Secretary from office without assigning any reason.
51. The duties of the Secretaries include the recording and maintaining of correct accounts of the income and expenditure of the Diocese, preparing and presenting statements of accounts to the Diocesan Council at least twice a year and thereafter presenting the said Statement of Accounts to the Diocesan Assembly, and the recording and keeping the minutes of the Diocesan Assembly and the Diocesan Council.
52. The Secretary shall get printed the Statement of Accounts passed by the Diocesan Assembly and forward a copy of such statement to every church within the Diocese and one copy to the Malankara Metropolitan.
53. The monies of the Diocese shall be deposited in the name of the Diocesan Metropolitan.
54. The acquisition of any immovable property for the Diocese or the disposal of or the creation of any charge on any immovable property of the Diocese shall be done by the Diocesan Metropolitan and the Diocesan Secretary jointly and in pursuance of a decision thereto made by the Diocesan Assembly and the written consent of the Malankara Metropolitan.
55. The Diocesan Assembly shall meet at least once a year.

B. Diocesan Council.

56. Every Diocese shall have a Diocesan Council

57. Two Priests and four laymen elected by the Diocesan Assembly and the Diocesan Secretary shall be the members of the Council. Their term of office shall be three years. If in the meantime any vacancy arises in the council the remaining members have the right to co-opt another instead.
58. The Secretary of the Diocesan Assembly shall be the Secretary of the Council also.
59. The Diocesan Metropolitan shall convene the Council and shall preside over the meeting. The Metropolitan and three members shall constitute a quorum. The Diocesan Council shall meet at least twice a year.
60. In case any expenditure out of the Diocesan monies is to be made the Diocesan Metropolitan and the majority of the remaining members of the council shall agree.
61. The Diocesan Council shall prepare a budget for the Income and Expenditure of the Diocese and the Secretary shall incur expenditure only as provided for in the budget. If additional expenditure is to be made it shall be incurred only with the approval of the Council. But in the event of any urgency the Secretary may spend under orders of the Diocesan Metropolitan an amount not exceeding Rupees two hundred. Any such expenditure incurred without authority of the council shall be reported at the next meeting of the Council.
62. Appeal may be made to the Malankara Metropolitan against any decision of the Diocesan Metropolitan and the Malankara Metropolitan shall hear the appeal matter before his Advisory Council and make decision in consultation with the Council. If the Malankara Metropolitan deems it fit, he may issue a stay order that the decision of the Diocesan Metropolitan shall not be implemented till the decision of the appeal matter, and the Diocesan Metropolitan shall abide by such order.

C. Diocesan Metropolitan

63. Every Diocese shall have a Diocesan Metropolitan.
64. The Catholicos shall in consultation with the Malankara Association Managing Committee and according to the recommendation of the Malankara Episcopal Synod allocate Dioceses to the Metropolitan.
65. Matters concerning faith, order and discipline shall, subject to the decision of the Malankara Episcopal Synod, be under the control of the Diocesan Metropolitan.
66. The Diocesan Metropolitans shall carry on the administration of the Dioceses under their care subject to the supervision of the Malankara Metropolitan.
67. The expenses of the Diocesan Metropolitan on his visit to the churches of his Diocese shall be borne by such churches.
68. A Diocesan Metropolitan has no right to ordain a member of another Diocese or perform any administrative act within the limits of another Diocese without the request or consent of the Metropolitan of that Diocese.
69. If there be any personal acquisitions for a Diocesan Metropolitan at the time of his death which have not been included in his will, the same shall remain under the control of the Catholicos.

4. MALANKARA ARCH-DIOCESE.**A. Association**

70. The Malankara Arch-diocese shall have an Association by the name "Malankara Syrian Christian Association".
71. A priest and two laymen elected by each Parish Assembly and the members of the existing Managing Committee shall be members of the Association.
72. The Malankara Metropolitan shall be the President and the remaining prelates having administrative charge of Dioceses shall be Vice-Presidents of the Association.
73. The Malankara Metropolitan shall preside over meetings of the Association. When it is inconvenient for him one of the Vice-Presidents by nomination, and if the office is vacant the Vice-President who is the "Senior Metropolitan" shall preside. In this constitution "Senior Metropolitan" means the Metropolitan who is oldest by age among the Vice-Presidents.
74. The Malankara Metropolitan shall convene the Association and if the office is vacant, two of the Vice-Presidents or if they fail half of the members of the Managing Committee may convene the Association.
75. There shall be a Secretary for the Association. The Association Managing Committee shall elect the Secretary and if the Malankara Metropolitan ratifies the election it shall be valid. The Association Managing Committee has the right to remove the Secretary from office without assigning a reason.
76. There shall be a register for the movable and immovable properties of the Community and it shall be kept by the Secretary up-to-date and signed every year by the Malankara Metropolitan and two members of the Managing Committee.
77. The duties of the Secretary shall include recording and maintaining accounts of the income and expenditure from the assets of the Community and the revenues of the Malankara Arch-diocese, preparing and presenting up-to-date Statement of Accounts at the meetings of the Managing Committee and keeping the minutes of the Association and the Managing Committee.

B. Association Managing Committee.

78. There shall be a Managing Committee for the Association.
79. The members of the Managing Committee shall be, exclusive of the Association Secretary and the Community Trustees, eight priests and sixteen laymen elected by the Association. The term of office of the members of the Managing Committee shall be three years. The Association may at its discretion increase the membership of the Managing Committee. The Managing Committee may fill up any vacancy arising during its term of office by co-option. The Malankara Metropolitan may, if he feels it needful, nominate not more than two persons as members. When the Association shall increase the number of members of the Managing Committee the number of the members to be nominated by the Malankara Metropolitan shall also be increased.

80. The Malankara Metropolitan shall be the President of the Managing committee and the remaining prelates having administrative charge shall be Vice-Presidents.
81. The Malankara Metropolitan shall convene the Association Managing Committee and preside at the meeting. If the office of the Malankara Metropolitan is vacant two of the Vice-Presidents or if they fail, half of the members of the Committee may convene the Committee and in such cases the Senior Metropolitan among the Vice-Presidents shall preside. The Association Managing Committee shall meet at least twice a year.
82. The Association Secretary shall also be the Secretary of the Committee.
83. If any expenditure from the monies of the Malankara Diocese is to be made the majority of the Malankara Episcopal Synod and the majority of the Managing Committee members other than the Prelats shall agree.
84. For the income and expenditure of the Community, a budget shall be prepared by the Committee in the beginning of the year and any expenditure exceeding the same shall only be incurred with the consent of the Committee. However in case of any urgency the Malankara Metropolitan may spend an amount not exceeding five hundred Rupees and such expenditure shall be reported to the committee at its next session.
85. If any property is to be purchased for the Community or if any property of the Community is to be alienated or any charge created over the same it shall be so decided by the majority of the Managing Committee and of the Malankara Episcopal Synod and the deed therefor shall be executed by the Malankara Metropolitan and the Associate Trustee if the property belongs to the Joint Trust properties and by the Malankara Metropolitan alone if it belongs to the Malankara Metropolitan Trust.
86. Sub-Committees may be appointed with the approval of the Malankara Episcopal Synod by the Managing Committee for education, finance and similar matters needed for the church. The President of every such Sub-Committee shall be a Prelate.
87. The Association Managing Committee shall have a Working Committee consisting of not more than ten members and that body shall execute matters as decided by the Managing Committee. In case of urgent necessity the Working Committee may act on behalf of the Managing Committee in anticipation of its approval. All matters so done shall be reported to the Managing Committee and its approval obtained. The President of the Working Committee shall be the Malankara Metropolitan. A Prelate elected by the Malankara Episcopal Synod, the Community Trustees and the Association Secretary shall be members of the Working Committee. The remaining members shall be appointed by the Malankara Metropolitan in consultaion with them. Members of the Working Committee who are not already members of the Managing Committee, so long as they continue to be members of the Working Committee shall be members of the Managing Committee.
88. The Working Committee referred to in Section 87 shall also be the Consultative Committe of the Malankara Metropolitan.
89. The Association Secretary shall also be the Secretary of the Malankara

Metropolitan's Consultative Committee.

90. The Malankara Metropolitan may have an Assistant. If such Assistant is elected by the Association, he may be nominated by the Malankara Metropolitan. The Assistant shall be ex-officio member of the Managing Committee and the Working Committee.

C. The Community Trustees.

91. With the Malankara Metropolitan there shall be two persons, a priest and a layman who shall be Trustees for the Vattippanam (Trust Fund) and the Kottayam Syrian Seminary and the income which have accrued or shall accrue therefrom.
92. The Malankara Metropolitan shall be the Trustee for the rest of the Community properties if they are not subject to other special provisions.
93. The Association shall elect the Associate Trustees. The Association may remove them and appoint others without assigning any reason.

D. Malankara Metropolitan.

94. The Prime jurisdiction regarding the temporal ecclesiastical and spiritual administration of the Malankara Church is vested in the Malankara Metropolitan subject to the provisions of this constitution.
95. In case it happens that there is no Diocesan Metropolitan in any Diocese that Diocese shall be under the direct administration of the Malankara Metropolitan.
96. Common institutions and similar matters in the Malankara Church which do not specifically belong to a particular Diocese shall be directly under the supervision of the Malankara Metropolitan.
97. The Malankara Metropolitan shall be elected to that office by the Association.
98. The Catholicos may also hold the office of the Malankara Metropolitan. If the Malankara Metropolitan he shall be the President of the Association, the Managing Committee and the Metropolitan Trustee of the Community properties. The Malankara Metropolitan may officially visit all the parishes of the Malankara Church and if found needed, he may convene the Parish Assembly and the Diocesan Assembly after giving information to the Diocesan Metropolitan. When the Catholicos and the Malankara Metropolitan happen to be two individuals, regulations needed shall be made about their respective rights and powers.

5. CATHOLICOS.

99. The throne of the Catholicos was re-established in the Orthodox Syrian Church of the East which includes the Malankara Church in A.D. 1912. This institution has been functioning ever since in the Orthodox Syrian Church of the East.
100. The powers of the Catholicos include the consecration of Prelates, presiding over the Episcopal Synod, declaring its decisions and implementing them, conducting administration as representative of the Synod, and consecrating the Holy Mooron.

6. PATRIARCH.

101. The Malankara Church shall recognize the Patriarch, canonically consecrated with the co-operation of the Catholicos.

7. EPISCOPAL SYNOD.

102. There shall be an Episcopal Synod in Malankara.
103. All Prelates in Malankara shall be members of this Synod.
104. The Catholicos shall be the President of the Synod.
105. The Catholicos shall convene the Synod and preside over the Synod.
106. When there is no Catholicos or if there is any accusation against the Catholicos and the Catholicos does not convene the Synod for considering such accusation, the Senior Metropolitan shall convene the Synod and preside over the Synod.
107. The Episcopal Synod shall have the authority to decide matters concerning faith, order and discipline. When the Synod shall meet for this purpose, the Synod may select such persons as the Synod may deem needed for consultation.
108. No one shall have the right to alter the faith of the Church. But in case there may arise any dispute as to what is the faith, the Episcopal Synod above said may decide the matter and the final decision about this shall vest with the Ecumenical Synod.
109. The Episcopal Synod may in consultation with the Association Managing Committee appoint subcommittees for the purpose of Theological Education, Mission Works, Sunday School and similar matters.

8. ORDINATION.

A. Deacons and Priests.

110. A candidate for ordination should have at least passed the Intermediate Examination.
111. Those desiring to be ordained shall on the recommendation of the Parish Assembly or on their own apply to the Diocesan Metropolitan and he after due inquiry if he feels no objection shall send them to the Malankara Metropolitan and he according to convenience shall send them to the Theological Seminary of the community and if after needed theological study the principal of the Seminary certifies that they are fit for ordination, the Diocesan Metropolitan or Malankara Metropolitan will at their discretion ordain them. But after three years of theological studies if a certificate is issued by the principal the ordination of Korooyo (Reader) may be administered.

B. High Priests (Priests)

112. The Catholicos shall consecrate with the co-operation of the Episcopal Synod the required number of Bishops and Metropolitans for the Malankara Church. On the occasion of the consecration of a Bishop or a Metropolitan such Bishop or Metropolitan shall submit a statement regarding faith and

submission (Salmoosa) to the Catholicos, the President of the Synod. Catholicos shall give a certificate of consecration (Sthathicon) to the priest so consecrated.

113. If any one is to be consecrated a Bishop or Metropolitan he shall be elected to such office by the Association. If such election is approved by the Episcopal Synod, the Catholicos shall consecrate the candidate canonically with the co-operation of the Synod. For such election by the Association, there shall be a separate majority of the priests and of the laymen present at the Association.
114. If one is to be enthroned as Catholicos he shall be elected to that office by the Association. If such election is approved by the Episcopal Synod, the Synod shall enthrone that person as Catholicos. If there be a Patriarch recognised by the Malankara Church the Patriarch shall be invited when the Catholicos is to be enthroned and if the Patriarch arrives he shall as the President of the Synod enthrone the Catholicos with the co-operation of the Synod.

9. COMPLAINTS AND DECISIONS.

115. A complaint against a layman, a deacon or a priest shall be made to the Metropolitan of the Diocese to which he may belong.
116. The Metropolitan shall bring the complaint before the Diocesan Council and after giving notice to both parties and receiving their evidence and hearing arguments shall decide in consultation with the members of the Diocesan Council. Until such a decision is taken the Diocesan Metropolitan may take such actions by himself as he deems necessary.
117. Appeal may be made to the Malankara Metropolitan against the decision of the Diocesan Metropolitan and he shall bring such appeal before the Episcopal Synod and after giving notice to both parties and hearing arguments the Synod shall pronounce the decision in accordance with the opinion of the majority of its members. While the Synod is in session for this purpose such members of the Managing Committee as are deemed needed may be invited for consultation. The Malankara Metropolitan may as provided in section 62 above issue a stay order against the decision of the Diocesan Metropolitan.
118. Complaint against prelates shall be made to the President of the Episcopal Synod and the President shall bring it before the Synod and after giving notice to both parties and receiving evidence and hearing arguments the President shall pronounce the decision in accordance with the majority opinion of the Synod. If the complaint is against the Catholicos or the Patriarch, if there is a Patriarch recognised by the Malankara Church he shall also be invited and in the event of his arriving he shall be the President of the Synod and if he does not arrive the Synod shall pronounce the decision. While the Synod meets for these purposes such members of the Association or Managing Committee as are deemed needed may be invited for consultation.
119. When prelates are tried two persons who have acquired proficiency in the canons and Theology and two persons who are versed in law may be invited for consultation. They shall be members of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church.

10. INCOME.

120. The Vicar of every parish church shall collect "Resisa" at the rate of two annas every year from every male member who has passed the age of twenty one years, and shall send the same to the Catholicos.
121. The rates and similar matters regarding dues receivable by Churches or priests may with the approval of the Episcopal Synod, be decided by the Managing Committee.
122. Out of the annual gross income of a church including income from its properties, 10% on the first Rs. 500/- and 5% on the next Rs. 500/- to Rs. 1,500/- and 2½% on the amount above Rs. 1,500/- shall be sent every year to the Malankara Metropolitan. If the percentage as stated above of any church is less than Rs. 10/-, not less than Rs. 10/- shall be sent from that Church to the Malankara Metropolitan under this item.
123. The Malankara Metropolitan shall allot the income derived as above at the rate of 4 out of ten to the Diocesan Bishop, 2 to the Diocesan Fund, 1 to the Malankara Metropolitan and 3 to the Malankara Diocesan Fund.

11. MONASTERIES.

124. Monasteries or similar institutions shall be established only with the approval of the Episcopal Synod and all such institutions shall be subject to the authority of the Episcopal Synod.
125. If any or all members of any of the above institutions leave this church for another, all rights of such in the institutions or over their assets shall thereupon lapse and the institutions and their assets shall remain for ever in the ownership of this church.

12. RULE COMMITTEE

126. There shall be a Rule Committee appointed by the Association Managing Committee to make amendments to this constitution as are necessary to suit the times and the conveniences. The President of the Rule Committee shall be a Prelate.
127. The Rule Committee shall submit the amendments to the Association Managing Committee and those passed by the Association Managing Committee shall be in force till altered by the Association and the Episcopal Synod.

13. MISCELLANEOUS

128. The Parish Assembly, the Parish Managing Committee, the Diocesan Assembly, the Diocesan Council, the Malankara Association or the Association Managing Committee shall have no authority to pass any resolution concerning faith, order or discipline.
129. Byelaws which are not inconsistent with the principles contained in this constitution may be passed from time to time by the Parish Assembly, the Diocesan Assembly or the Diocesan Council and submitted to the Managing Committee through the Rule Committee and brought into force with the approval of the Managing Committee.

130. Any body or office, although this constitution provides for limitation of duration, shall continue to function until such time the next body or office begins to function.
131. If elected members of a committee absent themselves continuously for the sittings of the committee without proper reason their membership shall be lost. Each such committee shall have the right to decide whether the reason is proper or not.
132. All agreements, offices and practices which are not consistent with the provisions of this constitution are hereby made ineffective and are annulled.
133. In this constitution the word 'Diocesan Metropolitan' shall denote a prelate who has administration of a Diocese.
134. Deleted.

This Constitution was first brought into force on 26th December 1934 and amended on 17th May 1951 and further amended on 14th April 1967 and approved by the Holy Episcopal Synod, was promulgated by His Holiness Moran Mar Baselios Augen First, Catholicos of the East and Malankara Metropolitan per his order No: 156/67 of 26th June, 1967.

APPENDIX III

**A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY ON THE
HISTORY OF THE SYRIAN CHRISTIANS IN
INDIA**

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